

**Truro Select Board**  
**Tuesday, September 22, 2020**  
**Remote Meeting**

**Select Board Members Attending:** Robert Weinstein, Chair; Kristen Reed, Vice-Chair; Susan Areson, Clerk; Jan Worthington; and Stephanie Rein

**Attending:** Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer; Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark; Town Accountant Trudi Brazil, DPW Director Jarrod Cabral, Principal Assessor Jon Nahas; Paul Wisotzky; Staci Smith, Consensus Building Institute

**TRURO SELECT BOARD**

Select Board Chair Robert Weinstein opened the Select Board Meeting at 5:25PM. He introduced the Board and guests to the meeting.

**Public Comment**

Paul Wisotzky spoke as former Chair of the Select Board and citizen of Truro acknowledging and thanking Rae Ann Palmer, Town Manager for her 6 years of dedication and service to the Town of Truro. Select Board Chair Robert Weinstein concurred with Mr. Wisotzky on the accomplishments of Town Manager Palmer and her tireless efforts to negotiate with Comcast.

**Public Hearing and Vote on Fiscal Year 2021 Tax Classification**

Select Board Chair Weinstein read the Public Hearing notice for the Tax Classification.

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a roll call vote to open the Tax Classification Public Hearing. Stephanie Rein-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Kristen Reed-Aye; and Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

Jon Nahas, Truro's Principal Assessor, explained that the 2021 property values realized a total 2.1% growth in overall property value over the Fiscal Year 2020 values. He explained the process for acquiring the total Fiscal Year levy limit of \$16,597,422. The levy limit is increased by any voter-approved capital and or debt exclusions and other special assessments which gives Truro the maximum allowable levy of \$17 481,627. The Fiscal Year 2021 levy ceiling is \$59,192,960.

Principal Assessor Nahas reported that four options need to be voted on. The options are: classifying or splitting the tax rate, deciding on an Open Space discount, deciding whether Truro will offer a Small Business Commercial exemption and if Truro will offer a residential exemption. The Board of Assessors recommended not splitting the tax rate, not granting the Open Space discount and not granting a Small Business Commercial Exemption. Lastly, Principal Assessor Nahas explained the Residential Tax Exemption (RTE). The RTE allows for the exemption of a portion of the residential value of a property for residents who demonstrate that Truro is their primary domicile. It provides a decrease in the taxable value of qualified residences. The amount of the tax levy paid by the Residential Class remains the same, however, due to the exempted valuation, it is distributed over less assessed value, resulting in the entire residential class paying a higher tax rate. Truro has adopted the Residential Exemption over the

last three years. This option exempts value only within the residential class of taxpayers and does not change the levy amount itself or impact Commercial Industrial or Personal property owners. Principal Assessor Nahas explained the process for determining the total residential exemption value. The exemption amount may not exceed 35%.

Principal Assessor Nahas, explained the impact on the Tax Rate. He noted that residents have until April 1, 2021 to apply for a Residential Exemption. He further explained how a qualifying and a nonqualifying parcels are affected by the Residential Tax Exemption. He added that the RTE is designed to represent a greater benefit to lower valued homes. Principal Assessor Nahas recapped the votes of the Board of Assessors.

At the Board of Assessors meeting on September 9, 2020, the Board voted to recommend a Residential Factor of "1" (not to split the tax rate); recommended not to grant an Open Space Discount; recommended not to grant a Small Business Exemption w/in the Commercial Class; and recommended to grant a Residential Exemption at the current 20% rate.

Select Board Vice-Chair Kristen Reed asked Principal Assessor Nahas if the Board of Assessors had discussed any other percentage besides 20%. He responded that the consensus was to leave the percentage at 20%. He said that they wanted to maintain that rate. Select Board Member Susan Areson asked if the presentation will be on the Town Website. The presentation will be available in multiple locations on the website.

Clinton Kershaw, Truro Resident, stated that the Tax Rate has doubled in the last 12 years. He spoke of the 61% of the qualifying properties for the tax exemption are below the mean price. He asked that the Residential Tax Exemption level be raised since every time the Tax level is increased someone in Truro moves out. He asked that the residential exemption rate be increased to 35%.

Select Board Chair Weinstein reviewed what other towns' Residential Rates were in comparison to Truro's. There was a brief discussion on the number of properties that qualified in comparison to last year.

Select Board Areson stated that she would be in favor of the recommendation of the Board of Assessors.

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion to close the Public Hearing.*

*Select Board Clerk Areson moved the Motion. Seconded by Select Board Member Stephanie Rein. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

Select Board Chair Weinstein reviewed the vote of the Board of Assessors for a Residential Exemption rate of 20%.

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion to approve a residential factor of "1". Select Board Clerk Areson moved the Motion. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed Seconded the motion.*

*Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion not to grant an Open Space Discount. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed moved the Motion. Select Board Clerk Areson Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion not to grant a Small Business Exemption. Select Board Clerk Areson moved the Motion. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a motion to grant a Residential Tax Exemption Rate at 25%. Select Board Clerk Areson stated that she was not in favor of that increase. Select Board Member Worthington agreed, hoping to make strides with the Non-Resident Tax paying community. Select Board Member Rein stated that she could be swayed to raise it to 25% but would support what the majority of the Board agreed upon. Principal Assessor Nahas reviewed the impact of 20% versus 25%. He added that, as of this year, 61% of the exemptions are granted to parcels at or below the average residential parcel. Select Board Chair Weinstein stated that he would support an increase to 25%. Town Manager Palmer noted that currently they are working on a reduced budget. Select Board Member Worthington felt that this was not a good time to raise this amount due to the uncertainty. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed felt that the uncertainty was a good reason to increase it to 25%. Select Board Chair Weinstein added that he wasn't aware as to how this would affect the already decreased budget due to Covid-19 until the Town Manager made her comments. Select Board Member Rein agreed that Covid-19 has impacted many and that the rate could be increased in the future but added at the moment she supports staying at 20%.*

*Select Board Chair Weinstein stated that he would entertain a Motion to grant the Residential Tax Exemption in the amount of 20%. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed Moved the Motion. Select Board Member Worthington Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

Principal Assessor Nahas added that if the proposed budget passes at the Annual Town Meeting on September 26, 2020, the Excess Levy Capacity for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Town of Truro will be \$633,164.48.

### **Discussion of Walsh Property Applicants**

Town Manager Palmer recommended that the Board listen to the report of Staci Smith and defer the vote of the applicants until the next meeting. Staci Smith, Managing Director of the Consensus Building Institute, explained her work since June 2019 for the Walsh Property Planning Committee. In June 2019 the community was solicited for applications to serve on the Walsh Property Planning Committee. From July through September 30 applicants applied to serve on the Committee. She spoke of what the applicants prioritized on their applications for

work that they wish would be done on the property. Many applicants valued more than one priority.

Ms. Smith showed the geographical range of where the applicants live. She added that some have held membership in Town Committees, and some were brand new to serving. She also spoke of the diversity in expertise, skills and backgrounds of the applicants and recommended a Committee of 16 people. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed asked to see the applications of people she was not familiar with. Ms. Smith felt that the Board could review the applications and not necessarily start deliberating.

Ms. Smith noted that there are some applicants that feel strongly about what they want to see on the site, but agree that ultimately, the Committee needs to reach some kind of consensus. Town Meeting will be voting on the plan ultimately, so all points of view should be represented.

Select Board Member Rein agreed to wanting to see the applications, so she may understand the applicants' specific backgrounds. Select Board Chair Weinstein concurred that he would like to see the applications.

Select Board Member Areson agreed that the Board needs to be careful as to who they appoint. Ms. Smith noted that her objectivity is important but stated that as an option the Board could invite a particular applicant to the meeting if the Board has questions. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed stated that she is only interested in seeing the 16 applications of those chosen and would not eliminate any from consideration.

Town Manager Palmer suggested that the 16 applications be placed in Dropbox and if the Board chose to interview the applicants they could. Select Board Member Areson stated that the Board could place it on the next Agenda and anticipate a vote but did not recommend holding additional interviews, as the applicants had interviewed with Ms. Smith. Select Board Chair Weinstein stated that he is familiar with some of the names and doesn't want to violate the process at this time and asked for a Motion. Town Manager Palmer stated that the item needs to be Tabled.

*Select Board Areson Moved to Table the item to the next meeting on October 13, 2020. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye.  
Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

### **Discussion of Town Hall Bells**

Select Board Member Worthington spoke of the history of the Town Hall bells and the adjustment to the sound with respect to the Town Hall neighbors. Select Board Member Worthington stated Truro needs something unifying for everyone, especially during the COVID pandemic. She spoke of the fire horn as being an alternative if the bells cannot be fixed. DPW Director Jarrod Cabral said that the bells were refreshed and serviced, and the software was updated over the last couple of weeks. He explained that he has been logging the decibel levels to make sure that the bell sound is compliant. He added that the bells will go off between 11am-7pm on the hour. He explained his process for gathering the decibel information on site. He

added that he will be working with the Health Agent to be on the same page for regulatory measures. He responded to Select Board Member Worthington that any removal of the buffer would create noncompliance of the decibel levels.

Town Manager Palmer stated that the bells had been off for a while but were turned on in 2018. She suggested different times the Board could ring the bell at a louder decibel. Select Board Member Worthington asked if there could be a conversation with the neighbor. Select Board Clerk Areson asked if the bells would ring Monday through Friday. DPW Director Cabral stated that DEP recommended those days. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed heard from constituents who remember the bells fondly going back to their childhoods. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed suggested weighing the cost of the litigation regarding the bells with the joy that the bells bring to people. Town Manager Palmer suggested that it would be difficult to confirm the cost of the bell litigation as invoices only need to be kept for three years and the previous law firm was not very detailed in their invoices. Select Board Chair Weinstein stated that he remembered the bells fondly. He added that he would be willing to speak with the Complainant with the suggestion that the bells ring at 12pm and 6pm. Select Board Member Rein agreed that if the bells rang two times a day, it would have more meaning to the community.

Select Board Chair Weinstein asked if there is a decibel level for the two times a day for chiming. DPW Director Cabral responded controlling the decibels for a 12pm and 6pm schedule could possibly work. Select Board Member Areson was concerned that the neighbors have veto-power over the bell chiming schedule. DPW Director Cabral clarified that the original complainants were 13 abutters. The complainant now is just the one neighbor to Town Hall. Select Board Chair Weinstein stated that he would be happy for any input from his colleagues on the approach with the neighbor. Town Manager Palmer stated that the DPW Director should follow DEP guidance on the decibel level. DPW Director Cabral agreed to getting the Board information on the exact allowable decibel level for the Chair's conversation with the abutter.

## CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Review/Approve and Authorize Signature:
  - 1. *2020 Seasonal Business License: Babe's Restaurant (Common Victualer)*
- B. Review and Approve Amendments to the SBA Wireless Tower Communications Facilities Lease Agreement
- C. Eversource License Agreement-Electric Vehicle Charging Station
- D. Review and Approve Select Board Minutes: August 12, 2020, August 18, 2020, September 4, 2020

Select Board Clerk Areson stated that she would send minute corrections to the Administration Office. Select Board Member Rein noted she had a correction on the August 12<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, page 4, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph from bottom which should read "chance" not "change". Select Board Clerk Areson noted in the September 9 minutes, that Reporter K.C. Myers' name is misspelled. Select Board Member Areson reminded the Chair that Jessica Elder, Eversource's Right of Way Agent, was on hold still. Ms. Elder commented that the electrical pole was being installed for the electric vehicle station, at the Town Hall parking lot.

*Select Board Clerk Areson Moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the corrections noted. Select Board Member Rein Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

### **Select Board Reports or Comments**

Select Board Chair Weinstein thanked the Board for all their efforts as they have been meeting frequently in stressful times. Select Board Member Worthington reported that the Board voted unanimously for Darrin Tangeman and hopefully they will hire him and go into negotiations for a contract. Select Board Clerk Reed echoed the sentiments of her colleagues from earlier in the meeting thanking Town Manager Palmer for her efforts in stewarding the town through very difficult times. Select Board Member Rein thanked Town Manager Palmer for continuing to aid Truro and wished her the best of luck in her future endeavors. Select Board Clerk Areson thanked Town Manager Palmer for extending her time with the town and for assistance in getting them through the budget season for Town Meeting. Select Board Member Worthington thanked Town Manager Palmer for always being there for the Board and the Community during these difficult times. Town Manager Palmer thanked the Board and the Community. Select Board Chair Weinstein thanked the Town Manager for her enormous dedication and her assistance in these trying times.

Select Board Vice-Chair Reed stated that the Provincetown Town Meeting approved funds for the Fire Department to do a study and wondered if Truro had ever done a study. Select Board Member Worthington stated that they should find a way to work with Provincetown in a collaborative way to see what works for all three entities. Town Manager Palmer added that there was a report done in 2013, which, in part, helped Truro move to a professional department. Town Manager Palmer stated that she would reach out to Interim Town Manager Charlie Sumner to see what Provincetown's plan will be. The Zoning Board of Appeals work regarding Cloverleaf project was expanded on by Select Board Clerk Areson. She has found the process very fair and the Board members deserve praise for all their hard work.

Select Board Vice-Chair Reed commented on the Town Meeting introductory video, which provided guidance to Town Meeting attendees on what to expect at the meeting.

### **Town Manager Report**

Town Manager Palmer clarified the process for transferred money out of the Affordable Housing Trust. The Housing Authority generally makes a request to the Trustees for the funds for a specific purpose. The Trustees (the Select Board) vote to either approve or disapprove.

Select Board Member Worthington commented that people feel that certain things have happened without them knowing what was happening. She added that transparency is vitally important, and people need to know where the money goes and why. She added that she felt that there should have been a separate Article explaining that money from Free Cash was going directly to the Cloverleaf. She added that \$400,000 is going into the Affordable Housing Trust and that at the Housing Authority meeting, the Housing Authority discussed using that money

for the Cloverleaf. She said that people will feel that they did not have a say as to how much or when these funds will be used for the Cloverleaf.

She felt that the voters should be able to vote on it; not just the Select Board and the Housing Authority. Town Manager Palmer stated that the final approval of funding will be determined once the application for funding is submitted. This will not be done until after the permit, so dedicating money at this point would be premature. She noted use of the funds for other programs is also being discussed. Select Board Member Worthington responded that the Housing Authority members said that the funds were going to Ted Malone.

Select Board Vice-Chair Reed agreed that there needs to be clarity between the Truro Affordable Housing Trust and the Housing Authority as they are distinctly different, and this should be clarified at Town Meeting. Town Manager Palmer also addressed the belief that there was a lack of transparency as there were multiple Select Board Meetings approving the acquisition of the property, the concept of going to more units, the RFP, and the design of the buildings.

#### **Next Meeting Agenda**

Walsh Property Planning Committee Vote; Select Board Meeting Calendar for 2021. The 1/12<sup>th</sup> budget was below 1/12<sup>th</sup> and needs to be revised to bring it up to a full 1/12<sup>th</sup>. Town Manager Palmer reported that they were \$40K short so this agenda item is added to the Friday meeting of the Select Board. Town Manager Palmer reported, in response to Select Board Member Rein's request for a DPW facility report, that staff is waiting for Environmental Review of the existing site.

Select Board Member Worthington asked if Select Board Office Hours could resume. Town Manager Palmer stated that they could be facilitated through GoToMeeting or Zoom with the assistance of the Assistant Town Manager.

#### **Adjournment**

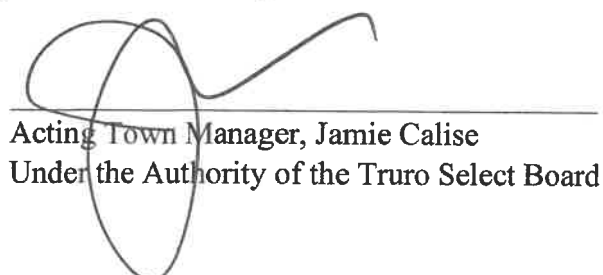
*Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion to Adjourn. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed so moved. Select Board Member Rein Seconded the Motion. Kristen Reed-Aye; Susan Areson-Aye; Jan Worthington-Aye; Stephanie Rein-Aye; Robert Weinstein-Aye. Roll Call Vote, Motion Passes, 5-0-0.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.*

Respectfully submitted,



Nicole Tudor, Executive Assistant



Acting Town Manager, Jamie Calise  
Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

**Public Records material of 09/22/2020**

1. Tax Classification Hearing Notice
2. BoA Recommendation to Select Board
3. Fiscal Year 2021 LA4
4. Fiscal Year 2021 Residential Exemption Facts
5. Babe's Restaurant Application
6. SBA Cell Tower Amendment
7. Eversource License Agreement
8. Draft Minutes: August 12, 2020, August 18, 2020 and September 4, 2020
9. Tax Classification PowerPoint Presentation

