

TOWN OF TRURO
SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2020 at 7:00pm
Remote Meeting Via GoToMeeting

Select Board Members Present: Chair-Robert Weinstein, Vice Chair-Kristen Reed, Clerk-Susan Areson, Member-Stephanie Rein, Member-Jan Worthington

Select Board Members Absent: None

Others Present: Town Manager-Rae Ann Palmer, Assistant Town Manager-Kelly Sullivan Clark, Bernie Lynch, Darrin Tangeman, Paul Wisotzky

Chair Weinstein called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and read off the 800 number and access code for citizens to join the meeting. He stated that the Board would be asking a series of 10 questions and then asked Mr. Tangeman to introduce himself.

Mr. Tangeman was born and raised in Kansas. He has two children. He received his undergrad in Psychology at the University of Kansas and then entered the military as a commissioned officer. He spent twenty-one years in the military. Half of his career in the military was in Medical Service where he served in Emergency Medical Services Information/Technology roles, and in command roles where he deployed to Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina during 9/11. While in Afghanistan he decided he wanted to become a Special Forces Officer. He spent twelve years in Europe, Africa, and Middle East on different missions. Mr. Tangeman sought a master's degree in Public Administration, a Master of Science in Public Policy and Security Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School. At that point he transitioned out and retired from the military and became a local government manager.

Town Manager Candidate Interview

Question 1-Member Worthington- "Based on your research about Truro, what would you define as the top three issues facing the town right now?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Covid-19
- Housing Issues with 73% of the community being second homes for people, affordability of our housing, and how to meet the 10% requirement for Truro.
- Environmental issues with climate change and erosion, also issues with water quality.
- Engagement issues between elements of the community/first and second homeowners/part-timers and full-time residents.

Question 2-Member Rein- "In your first 30 days on the job, how will you prioritize and allocate your time? Besides Town staff and the Select Board, who will you be reaching out to as a way of learning about our community?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- A thirty-day plan for any Manager is to come in and build relationships, listen, and observe.
- Hear from the Select Board and employees to understand what their challenges and opportunities are, and what can be done to address their issues.
- Listen to Select Board and find out what their priorities are, and the consensus around those issues.
- Establish his leadership philosophy and expectations of staff so they understand where he stands as a leader and what he expects of them as staff.
- Engage other Boards, Committees, and Commissions.
- Talk to businesses and find out how they are being impacted.

- Reach out to part-time residents.
- Talk with adjacent Town Managers and find out how to collaborate on issues and improve relationships.

Question 3-Member Reed- "What do you see as the most pressing issues related to the environment, as well as climate change, facing the town of Truro and the outer Cape?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Erosion
- Water quality
- Denitrification of water sources because of the septic along the Cape.

Part 2 of the question; "What experience will you bring and what will you need to learn about?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He has experience working with water quality and stormwater management. Experience he's gained from Colorado is directly relevant to the water quality and stormwater and erosion issues faced in Truro.
- Beach erosion and the shark population are things he'll have to do some research on, but he's very analytic and data driven.

Question 4-Chair Weinstein- "In June 2021, all three collective bargaining agreements will expire. How will you approach the contract renewal process? What experience do you have working with labor unions?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- In terms of how to approach this, he feels you have to establish negotiation teams and find the right people on your staff that can assist in the process. He knows Truro has a great employment attorney.
- Mr. Tangeman has had the opportunity to negotiate quite a few contracts in his time as a Town and City Manager. He's not concerned about negotiating contracts and collective bargaining agreements.
- He has worked with the local fire department in Colorado to meet requirements and needs and was involved in budgeting and contracts. That experience plays a role in future negotiations for the collective bargaining agreements.
- It's been said that there is concern about all three expiring in the same year and he's suggested potentially looking at staggering those over a few years so there is more time to have in-depth discussions with partners in the process.

Question 5-Member Worthington- "The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic had profoundly affected the way municipal government functions. How will you manage Truro's ongoing response, including how it relates to the municipal services, revenue, tourism, and public health?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- The real focus is being flexible.
- Planning ahead is key. Where he works now, they've established a phased plan to address the changes in policies as they start to return to businesses in a way that's safe for both businesses, community, and employees.
- Having a plan in place with specific triggers will allow us to react quickly, rather than reactively.
- You must be flexible in term of employment law, and how you address your employees. Management has been very flexible in allowing employees to work from home and provide resources they need. They've received enough Coronavirus Relief Funds to put them towards remote work.
- They've been very conscious in terms of elections and billing and being able to put mechanisms/technology in place that allows residents to be able to pay their bills or get a permit, from a technological perspective.
- Communication is key. Being able to communicate to the community about changing policies, where they can get information from different departments, how can they pay their bills and how they can engage with the Select Board and staff.
- Prioritize resources. They've had to cut back on recreation programs and furlough 44 employees.

Member Areson asked what the community has done in terms of getting people back to work in town buildings and if they were still having people work from home?

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Up until about 45 days ago, their facility was still closed to the public. During that time, they had 50% occupation of the building. They held lots of Zoom meetings.
- He worked with the local Chamber of Commerce, in terms of getting businesses back open.
- They took a survey to see how the community felt about safety. His community is split between both being safe and returning back to normal. He wanted to make sure they had the right understanding of where the community felt they should be going, and safety was one of the dominant themes.
- They worked with the Small Business Development Center and the Chamber of Commerce to promote a re-opening.

Question 6-Member Areson- "Can you tell us about your management and communication skills and talk about your approach to working with direct reports, balancing the need to train, develop and support while at the same time setting performance standards and requiring accountability?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He has an established leadership philosophy and expectations document for himself. It helps drive his focus as a leader for the first 30 to 90 days.
- Mentorship, and being a servant leader, is something incredibly important to him. We can't grow as professionals, grow as an organization and have a good organizational culture unless that's present.
- In terms of setting expectations, he looks at succession planning. You look at your staff and you try to find out what is their why? Talking to your staff about where they see themselves in the next five years. You ask what is fulfilling to them and you work from there.
- He would start creating a succession plan for the staff. Through that planning you try to establish a work plan for each of the direct reports. The plan identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each person and helps with finding resources they need to address those weaknesses.
- You want to work off the talents of your staff because they can make the organization better.
- As a leader, Mr. Tangeman wants to have clear communication. He has an open-door policy which gives all staff the opportunity to come in and talk to him about their concerns and their recommendations in a non-attribution environment so that they can communicate to him about things that are concerning to them.
- He has something he brings from the military which is called a Town Manager Critical Information Requirements document which outlines critical triggers. When staff communicates on critical issues, like a hurricane or other emergency events, you have to have things in place for staff to understand the expectations for those communications.
- You need to recognize achievement. When you see your staff do great things for your community you have to recognize those achievements publicly and internally within your organization.

Question 7-Member Reed- "As you know, Truro has an affordable and attainable housing crisis. What is your experience with addressing a housing crisis and working to develop community consensus around projects and solutions?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He's had experience in both in two different locations. In Pueblo West they had an affordable housing issue, but it was addressed through a distinctly different program. He worked with affordable housing developers and their tax credit program in the State of Colorado to help fund a Veteran-specific housing program.
- In Woodland Park they've had a little more difficulty in that they have a very similar issue in terms of affordable housing for their workforce.
- Innovative and creative ways of providing affordable and attainable housing can often be a sticking point with the community. If you don't accompany those actions with engagement of the community it can be painful.
- Zoning is an important aspect of allowing for those types of housing opportunities. Mr. Tangeman knows Truro is dealing with ADUs and with some of the obstacles of ADUs.

Question 8-Chair Weinstein- "What will your approach be to working with the Select Board? In your experience, what are some best practices you have, related to supporting and working with the appointing and policy setting body?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He often leans on his colleagues in the International City County Management Association for these best practices. One of the things he brings is that Town Manager Critical Information Requirements document. A good Town Manager over-communicates.
- You have to establish clear communication guidelines with expectations for both the Select Board and your staff.
- Who, what, when, where, and why? Get that information to the Board in a timely manner.
- He would do the same with staff, because staff is often the resource to communicate to the Select Board. Staff needs to know what the expectations are and how quickly they need to communicate those issues.
- When you establish clear expectations, a misunderstanding won't come into the fold and that's how Mr. Tangeman personally feels you can mitigate conflict between management, staff, and Select Board.
- He added that he would want to find out what the Select Board communication preferences are.
- It comes down to getting to know each Select Person, their priorities and communication preferences, to mitigate future conflict.

Member Areson had a follow-up question. She noted that Mr. Tangeman has never worked with a Select Board but has worked with councils and mayors. He's expressed interest in the historical form of government. She asked him to speak a bit more about how he's going to learn Town Meeting as the legislative body. How will he familiarize himself with Truro's form of government, which is different from what he's been working in?

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Mr. Tangeman thinks the history is fascinating, and the form of town meeting government is a great way to have incredible engagement with the community.
- He's reached out to several colleagues who are in similar situations and has talked to them about their experiences. One of the things they've expressed to him is that it's a very deliberate process which you have all year and that he will need to ensure engagement of the community to be ready for that meeting.
- He will lean on staff and the Select Board as they have been through this before.

Question 9-Member Areson- "Can you tell us about your financial management skills? What are your experiences in creating budgets for municipalities with an eye toward meeting services, and at the same time, managing the tax burden and the budget growth?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- One of the best practices he uses is a focus on priority-based budgeting. It is now a national trend in terms of how local governments approach budgeting and the most efficient way to do it. The process is about establishing goals and objectives upfront, going through as an organization in establishing your programs and services. Mr. Tangeman proceeded to explain the process.
- Priority based budgeting starts with the Select Board and the community establishing goals and priorities for the future.
- Often, in this process, he'll do an annual or biannual survey that gives feedback on where services are, in terms of the level of services the Town is providing, and where a community might want improvements or increases in those services.

Question 10-Member Rein- "Municipal government provides services. What is your approach to customer service?"

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- We provide services to our community, so our customers are our community. You have to have an organization that is customer centric. You have to have goals and vision, and a strategic perspective that really drives the organization.
- Mr. Tangeman states you have to have a culture of customer service and the right values.

- You don't want to put a lot of obstacles in the way, because if you put obstacles in the way of your staff you make it more difficult for them to address issues for their customers.
- You put in general guidelines and values so they can make informed decisions and feel comfortable providing customer service to the community.
- Another piece is providing a feedback loop to the community on how the Town is doing. You can use surveys, social media, and other feedback mechanisms to get immediate feedback on issues within the community.
- He recognizes that Truro has a large tourism population and stated that they need to be a part of that as well.

Member Rein asked the second portion of the question. "What are some best practices that you have that you'll bring to Truro?". She feels he answered part of that but asked if he'd like to expand.

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He feels the survey process is extremely important. He's done two surveys in the past.
- One is an external survey. It's a resident or community satisfaction survey.
- The other is an internal survey for employees to find out ways that we can improve or do better as an organization.

Member Reed is of the belief that in order for government to work, people have to trust their government. One way to build trust is to have transparency. She has had community members and staff members ask what the Main Street situation was. She gave Mr. Tangeman an opportunity to explain what happened from his perspective.

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- There are two different newspapers in his community and the one which people probably saw had a more salacious headline.
- He serves as a staff liaison to their Main Street. He was in a meeting prior to the meeting that was brought up where they were discussing some issues with some revenue streams the City has for businesses. He had explained that the reduction in that revenue could have an impact on their ability to provide service to the community and he'd be concerned if they couldn't come to some kind of compromise in the future.
- In that meeting the majority of the Board expressed concern over the issue.
- The next meeting was going to be a week later. This meeting was to be a work session to provide information to the community about their non-profit coalition in Woodland Park.
- A non-agenda item was placed on the agenda that was supposed to establish a policy position for the board.
- As any city manager, he's responsible for implementing the rules and regulations of the city. They have their own bylaws and the bylaws strictly prohibited the placement of this non-agenda item for a policy position to be on it.
- Mr. Tangeman raised the issue to them, and they continued to move forward with the item. This was a virtual meeting and they lost one of the individuals that was a part of this decision and they didn't have a quorum, but still tried to force a vote on the issue.
- Mr. Tangeman raised the concern again, adding that they did not have a quorum and it would be an ineffective vote.
- Another concern of his was that two of the members who were in opposition to the issue were not there at the meeting and had told the group they would not be attending.
- He consulted his attorney to ask what should be done. His attorney recommended that Mr. Tangeman bring forth a formal ethics complaint. It wasn't an easy decision.
- He's not a person who is a stickler about rules, but when in light of being told that something is wrong and people are still doing it in public, you have to do something about it. You have to take a stand.

Member Areson asked what Mr. Tangeman would be thinking about if he were hired in terms of his tenure in Truro.

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- He thinks most people would say it's about the fit between the Town Manager and the Select Board and how long they can work together.

- He would never go into a community wanting to do a short tenure. He has two children and he'd like to see them in the community as long as possible. He's already retired once, and he doesn't need to retire any time in the near future. He'd like to stay as long as he can.

Member Areson brought up a paper Mr. Tangeman wrote about cognitive diversity in local government. She asked him to explain what that is.

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Cognitive diversity focuses on recruiting and retaining a team that provides different perspectives on problem solving in your organization. Not necessarily bring in the same people to your organization.
- It's different than demographic diversity. They complement each other, but they're definitely different.
- You have to focus on both and that's something he writes about quite a bit.
- Cognitive diversity contributes to the innovation and creativity of your organization, because your employees bring a different perspective to that problem solving.
- He thinks it's incredibly important that you're open-minded to both private sector employees and the military when recruiting for your organization. He loves to see people who have a business background or a military background, or someone who worked for a private consulting firm. Bringing those people in provides a completely different perspective to your organization.

Chair Weinstein asked Mr. Tangeman to explain the term *Performance Budgeting*.

Response from Mr. Tangeman:

- Mr. Tangeman stated it's called two different things; Priority Based Budgeting or Performance Based Budgeting. It focuses on establishing your priorities as an organization and setting criteria for the success of your services and programs, and allocating resources based on those priorities.
- It's kind of a budget process, but it's done in a more deliberate process and considers more than just opinion. It considers rules, regulations, laws, and mandates. As part of that decision-making process it takes into effect the strategic perspective and vision of the Select Board. It also takes into effect even how much of the community you serve under those services.
- He added that the more communities that add priority-based budgeting, the more collaborative opportunities you find in your adjacent communities.

Member Areson made a motion to adjourn at 8:13pm.

Member Worthington seconded.

So voted; 5-0-0, motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,

Noelle Scoullar

Noelle L. Scoullar

Interim Town Manager Jamie Calise

Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

