

Truro Select Board Special Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2020
Remote Via GoToMeeting Platform

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

Others Present: Interim Town Manager-Jamie Calise, Assistant Town Manager-Kelly Clark

Chair Weinstein called the meeting to order at 1:17pm and read off instructions on to join the meeting to provide comment.

Authorization for Execution of the Cape Light Compact Municipal Power Supply Contract

Chair Weinstein asked if he was correct in assuming that Town Counsel has had a chance to review the language of the contract and approved the language. Interim Town Manager Calise and Assistant Town Manager Clark confirmed that the contract was reviewed, and language was added, by the attorney for the Cape Light Compact, of which the Town is a part of. The attorney also provided insight into which aspects of the proposals were more advantageous to the members of the Cape Light Compact.

Member Reed made a motion to accept the Cape Light Compact Municipal Power Supply Contract, and to Authorize Interim Town Manager Calise to execute on Behalf of the Town.

Member Areson seconded.

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

Truro Select Board Budget Task Force Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2020
Remote Via GoToMeeting Platform

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

Finance Committee Members Present: Chair-Robert Panessiti, Rich Wood, Steven Roderick

Finance Committee Members Absent: Lori Meads, Raphael Richter

Others Present: Interim Town Manager-Jamie Calise, Assistant Town Manager-Kelly Clark, Town Accountant-Trudi Brazil, DPW Director-Jarrold Cabral, Harbor Master-Tony Jackett

Finance Committee Chair Panessiti called this portion of the meeting to order at 1:30pm. He proceeded to read off the instructions on how citizens could join the meeting to provide comment.

Finance Committee Chair Panessiti gave some background as to when the Budget Task Force was created. He wished to manage the public's expectations because they usually find that a lot of the budget is spoken for; through personnel, school, benefits, and basic services that are provided. The challenge this year is to determine how policy is shaping the budget. The Town went through an exercise to cut costs in anticipation of Covid's impacts on the budget. One of the things that should be considered is; who are we serving in the Town? The population, as represented by the election rolls,

increased by about 10 percent over the past 6 months. What does that mean? Who are these people? What kind of services are they going to demand? As the budget is reviewed, it is important to understand who it's meant to serve.

Member Areson wished to point out some items:

- We're at a point in Town where we have a lot of vacancies in key Town positions and a new Town Manager is coming in and will need to get up to speed quickly. There is an opportunity to take a hard look at services to see what they might want to expand and what they might want to do less of.
- In reading Department Head narratives, such as from the Health/Conservation Agent, whose work has most likely tripled since Covid, they should be mindful of where they really need extra help (whether temporary or permanent), and also where they may want to trim or decide to live without.
- She noticed that in a number of the budgets and narratives, people are talking about the data processing and credit card fees (something Member Reed brings up regularly). She wonders if someone could fill the Board in on how that's working with the individual departments. How has that impacted budgets overall?

Chair Weinstein stated that during one of their prior discussions they learned that the Town was obligated to around \$14,000 and he is glad that Member Areson raised the issue of credit card fees.

DPW Director Cabral pointed out that in his narrative he singled out the increase for credit card fees. Since the Department is moving to credit cards only for sales at the Transfer Station and also for online sales, there is a significant increase there for his Department. Harbor Master Jackett uses the same system, as does Beach/Rec Director Clements and there will be credit card fee increases in their budgets also. He does not see the Transfer Station going back to accepting cash/checks. A credit card swipe is a much cleaner operation.

Assistant Town Manager Clark was not sure how much credit card fees would change post Covid. The Town has been trying to limit the amount of cash transactions over the past few years, as recommended by the Town's auditors.

Member Reed reiterated that the \$14,000 in credit card fees was a pre- Covid number. That number existed before the push toward credit card transactions.

Member Areson said that it would be a policy question for the Board as to whether they would want to pass along that credit card processing fee to the customer.

Finance Committee Chair Panessiti stated that technology is here to stay. If the people in the Town appreciate, and want, this kind of service to pay their bills then the Board may want to take a proactive stance for what could be another health crisis. These are the kind of things they need to understand are here to stay. They have options. They could be passing the cost through to the customer. They also should look at staffing.

Chair Weinstein is unclear as to how the credit card fees are assessed to the Town and asked if there was one provider doing the servicing and what percentage the charge is. Town Accountant Brazil stated there was no single provider handling the fees. The fees are assessed to the community by each of the credit card companies. It's complicated to go through the list of fees that are produced on a daily basis

to determine which department is responsible for which charges, however DPW Director Cabral, Office Assistant Kaelberer, and Beach/Rec Director Clements have figured it out and have come up with net amounts which are the responsibility of the corresponding department. Town Accountant Brazil then explained how they make payment to the Treasurer from appropriated funds to make the bank account whole. She added that the fee is roughly 2.9 percent of a transaction, plus some sort of agency fee. Chair Weinstein wonders if the Town should drop certain credit card companies and accept only those that have a lower fee. He also stated that he does not know how that would impact things, and he added that they have to be sensitive to the public who carry multiple cards. Town Accountant Brazil believes that would be a policy decision. She mentioned that there have been instances where someone wished to make a donation to a Department, but the donation was contingent upon them being able to use their American Express card. Member Areson stated that some places will charge a flat fee for various transactions. It could be something to help offset the fees and suggested that it be something the Board look into. Member Reed suggested requesting staff to reach out to other towns to see how they handle the fees. She also feels that the Town should accept all credit cards. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti asked if it was possible for Town Accountant Brazil to look at some kind of a trend report. He feels the Board should know the number of transactions, what the trend line looks like and what companies are being utilized. Town Accountant Brazil stated that there is the ability to pay property taxes online through MCC, and there is a convenience fee associated with it. The drawback to MCC is that people can pay their property tax bills only for the first thirty days after they are issued. Chair Weinstein feels it would be helpful for Finance Committee Chair Panessiti, along with Department Heads, to collect data so there is some basis to have a comprehensive overview of this issue.

CIP/DPW

Interim Town Manager Calise gave an overview of the Capital Needs. Town Accountant Brazil wished to point out a couple of items. What has been given to the Select Board is a "big-picture" of projects. She referred only to FY2022 and mentioned the reserve to replace the communications system at the Police Station, and that three projects for the Truro Central School (skylight repair, window replacement, shingle/siding/trim) are being discussed by DPW Director Cabral and School Administration to potentially combine these projects into a single article and to fund it through a Capital Exclusion so there would be a one-year tax impact. She stated that there is also a request for \$170,000 for a heavy-duty tractor truck replacement from the DPW. That would be recommended to be done as a Capital Exclusion as well. If those items are funded differently than straight "Raise and Appropriate", the CIP for Fiscal 2022 goes down to \$510,900. DPW Director Cabral wished to point out that last year, prior to Covid, they were at approximately \$480,000. That was cut to \$280,000 due to Covid, of which \$135,000 was Covid-related.

DPW Director Cabral moved forward discussing the Capital Needs List and gave summaries of projects. Chair Weinstein asked if the Truro Central School's projects are physical maintenance issues which could be bundled so that one company would handle the whole project. DPW Director Cabral confirmed that those projects would typically be handled under one vendor. Chair Weinstein then asked about the line item for exterior painting for the School, which was left blank in FY2022. Since one of the items is to replace siding and trim, wouldn't that potentially include painting? DPW Director Cabral stated that the painting would be included in the bid.

Finance Committee Member Wood stated that in looking over the Capital Program it appears that a lot of the projects are the result of things are deteriorating. Other items might fall into a category of things nice to have but not necessarily critical. He mentioned the generator for the Beach Office and stated that when the Recreation/Beach Department comes before them it would be nice to see a cost-benefit analysis. He asked if he would want the Beach Attendants to have the ability to issue a Transfer Station

permit, which he does not think he would. As a brief response to Finance Committee Member Wood, Town Accountant Brazil said that if the Town had this technology at Head of the Meadow and Corn Hill Beach, the attendants would be able to issue per-day passes. Last year, in Fiscal Year 2020, Corn Hill Beach sold \$30,400 worth of per-day passes. In the current Fiscal Year, they sold none. Head of the Meadow Beach last year sold \$37,980 in per-day passes. This year they sold none. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti stated, for the benefit of people watching the meeting, that this is their first look at the budget, and Department wish-lists. The Finance Committee will now take sections back over the next few months and ask for supporting data and ask questions from the Town Accountant and Department Heads.

DPW Director Cabral discussed the DPW budgets starting with snow removal and lights. He then reviewed the Salary and Wages in the DPW budget and the purchase of services. He noted that with their bottom line is a \$119,000 increase. \$115,000 of that is for portable bathrooms and then a little bit in wages. Chair Weinstein noticed that the line that deals with portable toilets was highlighted and was significantly increased. He asked DPW Director Cabral to discuss that in more detail. DPW Director Cabral noted that in the past the Town had a contract with M.A. Frazier that contained a renewal for a second and third year. The owner honored the prevailing wage rate from his first year. It was a good relationship and the owner was responsive to any maintenance issues the Town had. The Town is participating in the County bid this year and he will see how that bid plays out. The prevailing wage rate will go up. They added a particular type of spray to use on the units so that will increase the daily fee and it is mandatory for the Town to have the portable toilets serviced daily, due to Covid. Finance Committee Member Roderick asked for a list of how many portable toilets are located throughout the Town and wanted to know if hand washing stations were added this year. DPW Department Cabral has a spreadsheet which lists the locations and quantities of the portable toilets that he can send out and stated that the hand washing stations were added last year due to Covid and that was not originally built into the \$45,000 budget from last year. Member Reed asked if the cost might go down in the future after a vaccine has been distributed. DPW Director Cabral hopes that post-Covid the Town will no longer need hand washing stations as that's the biggest part of the expense. He believes supply lines and hand sanitizer should be something the DPW can handle now. He does not see the daily service or the chemical spray that the units are sprayed down with changing. He thinks the \$45,000 number will go up. Assistant Town Manager Clark gave the group a summary on the number of portable toilets; 14 ADA portable toilets, 16 regular, and all, except for one, require daily cleaning.

Harbor/Shellfish

Harbor Master Jackett started by saying he had Doug Cameron, the Director of Fish and Game, look at the docks. There is a possibility that the State will either repair or replace the floating docks at no cost to the Town. Harbor Master Jackett has also been looking at the boat ramps. A work order could be provided to the DPW if he needs to do some concrete work to them. He spoke about the Harbor expenses and how they are pretty much the same from year to year. He has had continuity with returning seasonal staff and the only increase is for step increases.

On the shellfish side, Harbor Master Jackett reported he had a good boost stock which has expanded over the years. The number of people getting shellfish permits for the first time has steadily increased. Stock comes from the County and seed from Aquaculture Research Corporation in Dennis. Seed was planted in concert with the adult stock he gets. There has been a sizeable increase in soft-shell clams and the oysters have expanded down the river. Member Areson stated that the only increase in the budget is the \$1,000 fee for accepting credit cards and other than that, the budget looks lean. Member Worthington asked what the boating engine service request covered. Harbor Master Jackett stated it's a basic service/a tune-up. Town Accountant Brazil had a question regarding work on the boat ramps. She

asked if she was correct in thinking that the State actually owns the ramps. Harbor Master Jackett stated that even if he wanted to modify the ramps, that is something the State would pay for. Town Accountant Brazil continued, stating that, in terms of the maintenance work he'd mentioned (form work), shouldn't that be under the purview of the State? Harbor Master Jackett said yes. Chair Weinstein asked if there'd been any thought given to lobbying the State Representatives to have the ability to increase the user fees. He's focusing primarily on the fees for people who operate charter businesses. He feels they are responsible for the heaviest usage and deterioration of the ramps. Those fees have not changed in years. Chair Weinstein also asked if there has been a recent review of where we stand in terms of neighboring communities for what we charge for a shellfish license. He'd like to keep the Town's fees current. Harbor Master Jackett stated that the two items brought up by Chair Weinstein would be placed on the Pamet Harbor Committee and Shellfish Committee agendas for discussion. Chair Weinstein asked if there had been an increase in the number of shellfish permits issued. Harbor Master Jackett stated that he was unsure how many had sold, but he was seeing a lot of new faces. He thinks there has been an increase in the weekly permits sold. Member Reed referred to the Harbor Master's budget narrative regarding his methods of informing boaters and the public about harbor operations. Harbor Master Jackett stated it was information regarding navigating in and out of the Harbor, tying boats up, how to park their vehicles and trailers and other general information like that. Member Reed asked if it would be helpful to add general information to the Town website, so the public has a centralized location to learn about harbor operations. She asked him to think about what he might like on the website to provide citizens and visitors information that could help his department offer more efficient and quality services.

Member Areson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:12pm.

Member Worthington seconded.

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

Finance Committee Member Roderick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:13pm.

Finance Committee Member Wood seconded.

So voted; 3-0-2, motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,



Noelle L. Scoullar, Executive Assistant



Town Manager, Darrin Tangeman

Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

