

**Truro Select Board Budget Meeting
Monday, January 25, 2021
Remote Meeting**

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

Attending: Town Manager Darrin Tangeman; Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark; Jon Nahas Principal Assessor, Trudi Brazil Town Accountant, Bob Panessiti Chair Finance Committee, Raphael Richter and Richard Wood Finance Committee Members

**TRURO SELECT BOARD BUDGET
TASK FORCE**

Select Board Chair Robert Weinstein opened the Select Board Budget Task Force Meeting at 1:30PM. He introduced the Select Board Members. Finance Committee Chair Bob Panessiti introduced members of the Finance Committee.

There was brief commentary on the availability of a Finance Committee member to the Budget Task Force Meetings. Chair Weinstein hoped that the Budget Task Force meetings continue to get the valued participation from the full complement of the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee Chair spoke of the trends that he has seen as a member of the Committee for 20 years. He added that there is limited Commercial tax base in town and a reliance on property taxes. There are increases in regulation, staffing needs, and housing needs to address. Finance Committee Member Wood spoke of the role of the Finance Committee. Select Board Chair Weinstein noted his concern over the community becoming a non-resident community in the near future due to the cost of living in Truro and worries that the budget is adding to that projection. He continued to speak of the two portions of the budget: Capital expenses and Operating costs.

Select Board Clerk Areson reiterated the Chair's concern of the increasing Town Budget and noted that the State assessment of Truro's property values increased significantly. She asked if those numbers could be discussed at this meeting. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed asked for input from the Town Manager on their budget process thus far. Town Manager Tangeman stated that he has met with the various Department heads to see what they need to operate, the environment as it relates to Covid-19, and their projections for next year. He explained that there will be an additional meeting to understand where the limitations are and what are the priorities. He asked that the Select Board and the Finance Committee speak to their goals and objectives to help shape the budget.

Finance Committee Chair Panessiti added that they could look at other revenue sources if they are not reducing expenditures, suggesting that perhaps an Economic Development group on the Cape can give a presentation to see what other communities are doing.

Finance Department Budget

Principal Assessor Jon Nahas spoke to the contractual increases in the 5100-line item and an increase in 5200 purchase services line. A new item of \$5K was added for the Appellate Tax Board for consultant/legal fees if values need to be defended. FY22 is a recertification year, resulting in a higher cost for PK valuation services. The 5400-line item for supplies remains the same. The 5700-line item has a slight increase for the Massachusetts Assessors Association. The overall budget has an increase of 11.4%. Select Board Clerk Areson asked if there is an increase every 5 years for the certification.

Town Manager Tangeman contributed that recertification increase will not be included again for four years. Principal Assessor Nahas noted that *if* there is a need to explain the values at the Appellate Tax Board, the funds are there for additional support.

Select Board Chair Weinstein felt that the amount for the Appellate Tax Board defense was not unreasonable. Town Accountant Brazil asked for clarification on the local newspaper subscription total.

Parking Magistrate Budget

Principal Assessor Nahas commented that his additional role for the Town includes that of Parking Magistrate. He explained the role of the Parking Magistrate. As the Town no longer uses a third-party company for the motor vehicle holds at the Registry of Motor Vehicles there is a reduction in the budget for FY22 of 18%. Principal Assessor Nahas reported that in 2020 there were 283 parking tickets, for a revenue total of \$9,910.00 and he reported on the recent Demand Notices.

Town Accountant Department Budget

Town Accountant Trudi Brazil reviewed the Accounting department's budget. She explained the wage line item, with respect to salaries, vacation, and sick buy back. The Purchase of Services for \$1200 is for audit assistance. The supply line for \$700 has been reinstated to \$1000 for office supplies. The 5700-line item is for staff development, education, and training. The budget increased by roughly 3.1%. Town Accountant Brazil explained the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Town Manager Tangeman added that CAFR is a great tool to provide transparency of Town's budgeting for the community. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed asked if the information can be used for a cost-benefit analysis in the future. Town Accountant Brazil explained that the CAFR gives a fiscal picture of the community.

Finance Committee Member Wood asked about contracts expiring and projections. Town Account Brazil explained the process for negotiations with respect to Town Meeting. It was reported to Select Board Vice-Chair Reed that CAFR reports take 2-3 months for submission back to the municipality.

Information Technology Budget

IT Director David Wennerberg introduced himself. He stated that there is a 3.5% (\$12,891.00) increase in the IT Budget compared to last year. He spoke of the increase on the 5100 line for salary. Purchase of Service (5200) has an increase of \$5,423.00 for annual software maintenance. The supply line 5400 has a 6.7% increase (\$400). 5700 is unclassified with an 8.6% increase (\$128). 5800 Capital Outlay has an increase of \$6,850.00 for upgrading the internal WIFI at the Public Safety and the Library.

Select Board Vice-Chair Reed asked the IT Director for input on GoTo Meeting versus Zoom for video conferencing meetings. IT Director Wennerberg explained the reasoning for using GoTo Meeting for video conferencing. Town Manager Tangeman explained his history with Zoom Meeting and Microsoft Teams at his prior municipality. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed thanked everyone for their answer, adding that she primarily uses Zoom and was curious which platform was the best option.

Select Board Clerk Areson asked about the percentage carryover from year to year. Accountant Brazil noted that the IT Budget is comparing the FY22 request to the revised FY21 request. Typically, the FY22 budgets have been compared to the originally requested FY21 budgets. Select Board Chair Weinstein asked about Open Cape fiber optics. Open Cape is at Town Hall and Public Safety with connections for the Library and the Community Center and with Comcast as a backup.

Select Board Clerk Areson asked if there was an ability to film meetings in the Community Center. IT Director Wennerberg responded that the Pamet Room now has three cameras with recording equipment. Select Board Chair Weinstein asked about assistance from the Cape Cod Commission and if that was still ongoing. Director Wennerberg clarified that Barnstable County assists, and said their help is still an option but due to the Covid-19 restrictions, they were unable to do site visits. Director Wennerberg agreed with the Chair that their services were of great assistance to his department.

Select Board Clerk Areson thanked the IT Director for all his efforts during the pandemic which was agreed upon by members of the Budget Task Force and fellow staff members.

Moderator Department Budget

Select Board Chair Weinstein recused himself from the discussion. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed noted the consistent budget of the Town Moderator.

Select Board Budget

Town Manager Tangeman commented that there were no changes in the salary and wages line. There is a request to increase the Chamber of Commerce contract by \$20,347.00. There are two areas that the Chamber feels that the funds should be dedicated to: advertising and staffing of the information booth. Town Manager Tangeman asked for greater detail from the Chamber on this increase. He was concerned about the increase over time as he sees reductions in revenues in

other parts of the Town Budget. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed recused herself from the discussion as Chequessett Chocolate was a member of the Chamber. Finance Committee Member Wood asked generally if there was a list being maintained of items that need further discussion. Town Manager Tangeman concurred that bringing back any overages for discussion will help in prioritizing. Select Board Clerk Areson echoed the sentiment of the Town Manager and said it should be discussed at a later time with more information from the Chamber. Finance Chair Panessiti questioned the budget with respect to the Room Tax. Town Accountant Brazil noted the history of the Chamber's budget. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti spoke to the requested increase.

Select Board Member Rein asked what the Chamber members pay as a membership fee. Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark responded that the base price is \$250.00 per year and \$150.00 per year for a nonprofit. Select Board Member Rein felt that they were missing information to proceed with this discussion. Select Board Clerk Areson spoke to the room occupancy tax and the numerous ways that the funds can be used. She welcomed a more detailed discussion on the use of these funds. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti concurred that the budget should be looked at closely with an education for the taxpayers and budget forecasting to determine the needs of the community.

Town Manager Tangeman stated that the Chamber's membership dues are almost equal to the Town's contribution of \$37K with membership dues totaling around \$38K.

In the 5700-line item, the original FY22 request included \$10K, which went to \$5K when the budget was revised. The funds for the 400 Celebration were removed. There was a discussion on the current status of the 400 Celebration. Select Board Vice-Chair Reed asked if the Town allocated funds to the program. Town Accountant Brazil responded that the \$3K was not expended.

Town Manager Budget

Town Manager Tangeman explained the salary and wages line. Line item 5200 for the CDBG loan monitoring is paid for by program receipts which has to be budgeted due to Federal requirements. There is a reduction of \$1,000.00 in 5400 supplies. Select Board Chair Weinstein asked about the increase for the hourly wages in Admin salaries. Town Manager Tangeman responded that the Office Assistant position has taken on more responsibilities working with the Interim Town Planner. Chair Weinstein felt that it would be useful to have a compilation of these hours, as well as Town Counsel's hours, when contemplating filling the position of Town Planner. Town Manager Tangeman noted the asset of having Town Counsel assist in the capacity of Interim Town Planner. The cost in the first 5 months of the fiscal year has been \$50,448.00. Currently, the funds are being expended from the Town Counsel budget.

Select Board Clerk Areson acknowledged the work of Attorney Carboni. She questioned the additional \$16K, asking if it was for overtime cost of the Office Assistant Position. Assistant Town Manager Clark stated that the position is a 35 hour a week position, but with the additional

workload, was increased to 40 hours. Because the position calls for a higher grade, there is a higher pay rate included in the budget. Select Board Clerk Areson questioned if the time would be reduced once a Town Planner is hired. Town Manager Tangeman responded that they were budgeting for the current situation. There was a hold on posting the position of Town Planner in anticipation of a new Town Manager.

Finance Committee Budget

Town Manager Tangeman stated that there is a reduction in training otherwise the budget is fairly the same.

Reserve Fund

Town Manager Tangeman stated that he would like a discussion in the future on a Reserve fund policy. He responded to Finance Committee Member Wood, that the national standard is 16.67% for reserves. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti highlighted that there is the stabilization fund which follows investment banking guidelines to keep our bond rating intact. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti gave an overview of Truro's Reserve Funds history. He reiterated the importance of having a fiscal forecast and a risk assessment of the budget, as the Town needs to see what issues could potentially arise.

Legal Counsel Budget

Town Manager Tangeman reported that there is a small percentage increase of 2.17% for the legal counsel fund. He mentioned the increase with respect to Town Counsel representation for the Interim Town Planner. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti asked that KP Law Planning Assistance be portioned out for Town Meeting as this budget is discussed regularly at Town Meeting. He said he was curious if there was trend driving the numbers.

Select Board Clerk Areson spoke to the need for an Interim Planner for the last years on and off. Town Accountant Brazil noted FY17 was the last time the Town's previous Counsel was engaged. In 2011, the Town started using the services of KP Law and it became the primary law firm for the Town in 2013. Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for confirmation if the last case from the prior law firm related to a Land Use issue. Town Accountant Brazil concurred. Chair Weinstein agreed that he would like the breakdown of the KP Law fees.

COLA Budget (Cost-of-Living Adjustment)

Town Manager Tangeman reported that a 2% placeholder was included in the FY2022 proposed budget. Town Accountant Brazil confirmed that it is up to the Select Board to approve the amount for non-contracted, non-union employees (wage and compensation employees). Finance Committee Chair Panessiti asked if the reduction of 0.87% amount was due to reduction in staff, which was confirmed. Town Accountant Brazil responded to Select Board Clerk Areson that this "place holder" procedure was done the year prior and the amount is determined once Union negotiations are settled.

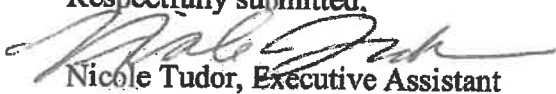
Select Board Clerk Areson asked that at the next Budget meeting the equalization per capita be discussed.

Adjournment

Select Board Chair Weinstein asked for a Motion to Adjourn. Select Board Clerk Areson made a Motion to adjourn. 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.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicole Tudor, Executive Assistant



Town Manager, Darrin Tangeman
Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

Public Records material of 01/25/2021

- Proposed FY22 Budget for Assessing Department/Parking Magistrate
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Information Technology
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Administration
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Select Board/Moderator
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Finance Committee
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Finance Department
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Legal Counsel
- Proposed FY22 Budget for Reserve Fund
- Proposed FY22 Budget for COLA

