

**Truro Reopening Task Force / Select Board  
Tuesday, May 12, 2020  
Remote Work Session**

**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; Town Accountant Trudi Brazil; Superintendent of Schools Michael Gradone; Police Chief Jamie Calise; Recreation/Beach Director Damion Clements; Bob Montano, Steven Roderick

Chair Janet Worthington opened the Select Board's remote work session and Truro Reopening Task Force meeting at 2:51p.m.

**Identifying Areas of Concern**

Janet Worthington and the other participants at the meeting identified areas of concern for reopenings. These included: beaches, beach stickers, social distancing, retail businesses, restaurants, the ponds, Pamet Harbor, Recreation programs, day care, lodging and short-term rentals. Superintendent of Schools Michael Gradone discussed the possibility of a summer session at the Truro Central School and his expectation to open in September with conditions. Additional concerns included: human services, the Library, COA, Town offices, entertainment, museums, construction trades, landscapers, the business sector, essential businesses, the golf course, private clubs and a miscellaneous category.

Robert Weinstein offered his impression, starting with what he called the "Governor's vagaries." He cautioned about the effort to open things up in a hurry. Considering that Massachusetts is the third state with the most active Covid cases, he said that we need to wait until Governor Baker offers clearer direction. Although he sees Truro operating blind in unknown territory, he said that Town functions should be a first priority. Businesses in Truro would be the second category. He suggested thinking proactively about permitting, the School, the Library and uniformity of approach. He said he would like to hear what other Cape communities are doing to prepare for summer visitors and beach sticker permits for part-time residents.

**Beach Concerns**

Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer shared what she, Jarrod Cabral, Emily Beebe and Damion Clements had heard from Orleans at a recent meeting. The Beach Department is now planning how to handle the sale of beach stickers to resident homeowners and full-time residents who rent. Applications can be made online and delivery done through the mail. This will minimize or eliminate the need for people to visit the beach office, which still needs to be open for lifeguards and communications. Because there is no way to social distance inside the beach office, any beach stickers obtained there would need to be done through online applications and curb side pick-up. Other measures are to suspend day passes, even though it will mean reduced revenue for the Town. Plans for reduced parking spaces at the beaches will decrease numbers on the beach and provide distancing in the parking lots. Beach stickers for non-residents may be a possibility depending upon short-term rentals being allowed. There was not support from the group for eliminating all non-resident beach stickers. The group is developing plans for one-way paths to and from the beaches

for better distancing. Keeping the lifeguards safe is a priority. Ms. Palmer said that the Town plans to hire EMTs for ocean beaches. Damion Clements said the plans for the online sticker sales and a decrease in parking are to help control the number of people on beaches.

Janet Worthington asked how the Town would manage parking at the beaches. Rae Ann Palmer said Jarrod Cabral and Damion Clements will work out ways to mark the allowed spaces, and they will provide support for the parking attendants. She said that people will be coming soon, and steps need to be put in place. Damion Clements said he has been in contact with Beach departments from other Cape towns and will develop plans for Truro consistent with theirs. Ponds are another area of concern but are under Seashore jurisdiction. There may be a need for no parking signs on the road entrances to ponds. Emily Beebe said Truro is working on messages that would be consistent with other towns.

Stephanie Rein revisited the discussion about stickers and asked how a 14-day quarantine for all types of residents would be regulated if the Town is offering everyone beach stickers. Rae Ann Palmer said that some part-time residents have already returned and completed their self-quarantine, but beach stickers could be held for two weeks when others arrive.

Kristen Reed asked about renters receiving beach stickers. Ms. Palmer said she was referencing year-round renters, not short-term ones. Kelly Clark mentioned that summer-long renters at campgrounds get non-resident stickers.

When Susan Areson asked Emily Beebe if she thought the 14-day quarantine advisory would be for the whole summer, the Health Agent said she believed it will go beyond May 18th. Ms. Areson said that although Truro will take its lead from the Governor, the Town can control whatever is possible at the municipal level. While guidance on reopening businesses should be up to the Governor, the Town should be able to decide about short-term rentals and limiting beach and beach office access. Ms. Areson asked about expectations for self-quarantine for a one week stay at a condo or other rental property. Kelly Clark added that there are not self-quarantine guidelines for people who have travelled to Truro from within the state.

Susan Areson expressed concern for the young beach attendants who might have to deal with non-compliant people arriving at the parking lots. Police Chief Jamie Calise said the attendants are taught not to confront belligerent people. They are not expected to deal with people who are not complying and are advised to call their supervisors to handle the situation.

Robert Weinstein said he hopes that signs, which Truro and other communities post at beaches, will protect staff, inform the public about use of the beach and prevent the kind of recent bad behavior that has occurred elsewhere. He has observed disregard for social distancing and wearing masks in the pond area within the National Seashore. He said the Seashore should post signs about distancing and masks since their trails are open to the public. Chair Worthington said everyone is still waiting for guidance from the Governor.

### **Concerns of Business Owners**

Business owners, Bob Montano and Steve Roderick, had been invited to the meeting to share their thoughts and concerns about reopening. Bob Montano said that outdoor seating might be a solution for restaurants which have the space for it, but his restaurant's parking lot is not a viable space. There also are the issues of hauling equipment in and out and unpredictable weather. He believes people will be

willing to police themselves on their own and appreciate businesses that take precautions. Businesses need to reopen, he said. Restaurants need full staffs, kitchens, bars and seating. Operating at only 25% will put people out of work and maybe out of business. Operating at 50% is going to be hard for a small business, he said. The burden of operating at a reduced percent makes it hard to pay the bills. Although Montano's stays open all winter, he needs the summer season to succeed.

Steve Roderick looked at how limited operations could affect workers who would not have enough quarters of time to qualify for unemployment in winter. They will need extensions. People will be without money. He said that the community needs to start preparing now. He advised maximizing seating, promoting the businesses that are open and working on more deliveries for retail and restaurants. He and Kristen Roberts discussed signs that could encourage this.

Bob Montano said his goals are providing good hospitality and pleasing people, but his main goal is to not let people get sick. However, he does not want to see the business he has worked so hard to create disappear. He is worried about the meals tax. He said he is doing well with the take-out service, but sales are down. He is optimistic about a June 1st opening, but he isn't anticipating the sales he's had in the past. He also pondered how the Town would survive without the meals tax and short-term rentals tax.

Janet Worthington mentioned the list of restaurants offering take-out services. Kristen Reed said the list is posted on the Town website, and other names are being added as the restaurants open. Steve Roderick asked Kristen Reed about her business. She said she does not know yet how the food truck will work this year. Bob Montano remembered another reason that outdoor seating was not going to be a solution – mosquitoes. Emily Beebe said that mosquitoes are another health concern.

The Health Agent said she will need to have a plan from everyone that is opening and will keep working with Bob Montano on an opening. If Montano's were to reopen today, she said, masks would be required for his employees. Mr. Montano said that plastic straws were back, Purell stations are installed, masks and digital forehead temperature checks will be done for all employees. He did not think the cook can work wearing a mask. Ms. Beebe said line workers and cooks will not be required to wear masks. All the health agents have been talking about these issues and waiting for more guidance. Janet Worthington said that while restaurant staff would be masked, obviously, patrons would not since they would be eating. Health Agent Beebe said separating the tables to maintain adequate distance between diners is very important.

Kristen Reed brought up the concern of patron's safety in bars, an issue that had not been previously discussed. Health Agent Beebe said she did not have answers. Kristen mentioned how bar sales dramatically impact profit margin for restaurants and how if banned could have a crippling impact on the restaurant as a whole. Janet Worthington wondered if it were possible to let people go outside with alcohol, but Bob Montano said you can't do that. He mentioned sneeze guards that are being installed for safety in some bars, but he questioned how much protection they provided.

Select Board members thanked Steve Roderick and Bob Montano for their participation, and Rae Ann Palmer asked them about their availability for future meetings. Both said they are available.

**Harbor Concerns**

Memorial Day is coming soon, and Chair Worthington said there are already concerns about the Harbor. Ms. Palmer said there are reports about out-of-state licenses there. She plans to ask the Police Chief and the Harbor Master to discuss ways of monitoring parking before it becomes more of a problem. She said the Harbor needs signs and an enforcement plan. Janet Worthington asked about limiting the parking at the Harbor. Ms. Palmer said the orders pertain to launching boats, rather than parking, but it should be limited. There's already very limited parking area, and they need to decide what to do about the trailers there. Susan Areson said that the state regulates the boat ramp but asked who regulated the parking lot and parking lot hours. Robert Weinstein said that the state regulates the parking lot and the ramp. He referenced the state order that no out-of-state vehicles are allowed, yet he has seen them there. He said that Rhode Island is allowing only in-state residents access for charter and head boats. Massachusetts is not allowing operation of charter boats and head boats. Mr. Weinstein said that Truro has control of the dock space and could establish social distancing for the dock. He said that the disease is calling the shots, not us. It presents a real issue as the time of the year with the biggest Harbor use is approaching. He said that signs reading, "Massachusetts residents only," would be helpful for the Harbor Master. Mr. Weinstein said the Town must encourage distancing and face coverings; it only takes one person to create disaster by spreading the disease.

Janet Worthington said that the dock is a very tight space, so that brings up enforcement issues and the need for a plan. Susan Areson wondered how many people with moorings are second homeowners who are from out of state. Rae Ann Palmer questioned how those people could get their boats into the water. The Governor could change the order, but the out-of-state homeowners want to put their boats into the water. Ms. Worthington noted that the Town cannot supersede state orders. Ms. Palmer said that the Town still has to realistically address the issue. Boats moored in the harbor are not the same as launches from the ramp. Susan Areson agreed that the Town needs to work with non-resident boat owners on a plan for putting their boats into their moorings. Mr. Weinstein said the Town needs to reach out to the out-of-state people with moorings to figure out a plan to let them use the facility. He said he was willing to work on this, but Rae Ann Palmer said Harbor Master Tony Jackett has already been in contact with the state board that makes the decisions.

Stephanie Rein and Kristen Reed offered a few ideas for identifying and monitoring mooring holders. Ms. Rein said that non-residents with a sticker identifying them as homeowners would work for mooring holders. Kristen Reed suggested having tags on vehicle mirrors to identify people authorized to operate in the parking lot to get to their boats.

**Public Safety**

Police Chief Jamie Calise discussed potential public safety problems. He said that the situation is fluid, and he is still awaiting guidance with the phasing that will be coming from the Governor next week. Truro's actions are dependent upon what is decided at the state level. The Police Chief said he would need to prioritize the most egregious actions, decide what the Truro Police Department is able to enforce and determine where they can rely on the public's cooperation. He believes that starts with messaging – signs at parking lots and the message boards on Rte. 6. Chief Calise said he puts a big emphasis on signs as a critical aspect of public safety. He said he has already received calls about people refusing to leave a business. Police chiefs from other towns are reporting similar incidents. He directs his officers to appeal to reason, but they will take enforcement action if necessary. He restated the importance of state-level guidance.

Janet Worthington asked about possible guidance on issuing warnings and tickets. He said that so far it has been up to the health agents with the police in supportive roles, but things are changing daily. With Massachusetts third in the most COVID-19 cases it is challenging. Chief Calise said that the police are working to the best of their ability. The department also gets messages out through Facebook.

Steve Roderick wanted to hear more about public safety issues. He said Provincetown faces the challenge of what to do about Commercial Street. They also want to avoid the stupid accidents that happen every summer. Closing the breakwater and bike trail, although that is controlled by the Park Service, were two possible ways to curtail the "stupid" accidents, leaving responders available for true medical emergencies, he said. He suggested that Truro think along these lines although he did not believe Truro had as many of those calls. Mr. Roderick also reported that a business owner said not all police were wearing masks in public areas as all leaders in the community should be doing. Police Chief Calise agreed that officers need to wear masks and are under the same orders for 6-foot distancing as everyone else.

Kristen Reed called attention to messages on the Town website from the Health Agent Beebe on best ways to wear a mask, regulations and voluntary compliance. She then asked for guidance from Health Agent Beebe and Police Chief Calise on how businesses should deal with non-compliant patrons in terms of COVID-19 safety measures.

She thought it would also be helpful to have a list of best practices to avoid escalation and advice on when to involve public safety officials. Emily Beebe said she would share that with other health agents to be sure signage is clear and standardized with other towns. Steve Roderick said some people are able to police themselves. It starts with good signage. However, he has witnessed arguments among patrons escalate. If a situation starts to develop, he said, sometimes it's good to remain a witness and call the police, rather than let things escalate.

Susan Areson said that she would like to hear about plans for Truro Central School from Michael Gradone. She suggested suspending further discussion of other topics until next week after the Governor provides more information. Ms. Areson said the Town should start online sales of beach stickers to residents. Rae Ann Palmer said that was something in the works.

#### **School & Recreation Summer Plans**

Superintendent of Schools Michael Gradone said that he is considering offering summer sessions. Recreation Department Director Damion Clements and Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer are not sure that the Recreation program at the school will happen. Superintendent Gradone reported that he spends half his time on plans for reopening school, but he is waiting for the Governor's decisions. He meets with Cape & Islands superintendents, who are also concerned about the neediest students. Superintendent Gradone would like to get them into a summer session and combine that with some vestige of a recreation program. It would also help their parents get back to work and restart the economy. He has been working on a plan with Damion Clements to operate in two levels of the building with recreation downstairs and classes upstairs. He will keep in touch with Health Agent Emily Beebe to see what will be allowed. Even a few kids over the summer could make up ground they've lost, he said.

Thinking ahead to a school opening in fall, Superintendent Gradone said one idea was splitting classes in half and meeting on alternate days. He said it might be possible to do split classes but not have to alternate the days. That could be done through local planning with assistance from the Health Agent. He expressed his willingness to continue participation in the Reopening Task Force meetings.

Chair Worthington suggested adding Governor Baker's Monday, May 18, 2020 message to the agenda for next week's regular meeting.

### **Beach Stickers Revisited**

Stephanie Rein continued the beach sticker discussion with a question about stickers for non-residents from other states. She asked how the Town could keep track of who's been here and when. Damion Clements said that unless the Beach Department can come up with a better mechanism for keeping track, there may not be sales of non-resident beach stickers this year. Kristen Reed said it might not be a popular idea, but what if everyone was required to wait 14 days before they could pick up their beach sticker. Ms. Palmer said the Town plans to mail the beach stickers in order to avoid pick-up at the Beach Office. She said information on the 14-day self-quarantine could be added into the envelope. She acknowledged that it would be impossible to figure out who comes back when. Susan Areson said that message boards and the mail inclusion would help, but the Town still will have to rely on people to do what they are being asked to do. The Town can't police everyone. Stephanie Rein observed that people can be anywhere when they order since the stickers are being offered online. She liked the suggestion to mail self-quarantine messages with the beach stickers.

Kristen Reed said you can't regulate people, but the Town can regulate parking lots. Regulations in place for parking could help with compliance. Ms. Palmer cautioned against creating confrontational situations at the beaches, saying those can occur no matter how good someone is at diffusing situations. Susan Areson said you can't make determinations on people based on their out-of-state license plates, pointing out that people coming from Vermont, a place with low instances of COVID-19 cases, is very different from someone arriving from a hotspot in Massachusetts.

### **Focus for Next Meeting**

Janet Worthington and Rae Ann Palmer agreed that discussions for the work sessions should be narrowed down and suggested focusing on the Pamet Harbor at the next meeting. Robert Weinstein said the Board should not drop the Town Manager Screening Committee from agendas and recommended setting up a calendar for moving forward with the Town Manager search. Ms. Palmer said she needed to contact the consultant to see what he suggests, and he will start working with the Screening Committee. Kristen Reed suggested adding event cancellations to the agenda. Susan Areson reported that all Truro Meeting House events have been cancelled. Rae Ann Palmer said even the PanMass Challenge has been cancelled. She suggested withholding approvals of other events seeking use of Town property.

Janet Worthington recommended discussion of the Harbor and events at the next work session. Rae Ann Palmer said she will invite National Seashore Superintendent Brian Carlstrom to a meeting. Susan Areson asked about a decision date for the Recreation program. Damion Clements said staff has been returning, and he has been preparing just in case they are given a go-ahead. He is waiting for guidance from CDC. Ms. Palmer said that even though former staff members are returning and recruitment is underway, there has been no decision on hiring yet. The program usually begins at the end of June, so a decision will have to be made early in June. Susan Areson suggested having the discussion on Recreation at the meeting in two weeks. Ms. Palmer said Damion Clements and Micheal Gradone could be invited to that meeting to discuss their plans for a summer program at the school. She said Eastham and Wellfleet are having the same conversations about their Recreation programs.

Ms. Palmer read and e-mail from Daniel Holt suggesting that beach stickers be dated. She mentioned that enforcement could be difficult, but she said that she will see what Damion Clements thinks of the idea.

**Adjournment**

Stephanie Rein moved to adjourn. Susan Areson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.  
The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Rogers, Secretary



Rae Ann Palmer

On behalf of the Truro Select Board

**Public records material of work session of 5/12/2020**

- E-mail message from Daniel Holt

