



TOWN OF TRURO

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To the Editor:

The Truro Select Board and Town Manager have been far from “silent” in this time of crisis. They have provided information about the COVID-19 virus, local and state resources available, and the status of all town operations. Your label of “malpractice” is inaccurate.

On March 6, the Truro Board of Health began providing information and resources about COVID-19 on its page of the Town of Truro website. Since March 8, the Town Manager’s weekly report, also available on the website, has provided updates on how COVID-19 has affected all town activities.

Since March 19, Truro has had a dedicated COVID-19 information page on the website, which is updated at least once a day. It details phone numbers and websites for all local and county medical resources, including symptoms, testing information and the number of cases in Truro. It advises local families how to get free meals for their children. It provides the status of all town buildings and how the public can conduct business with various departments.

Your editorial demands exactly what Truro’s COVID-19 page provides: “for everyone, year-rounders, part-timers, and visitors alike, life-saving information on proper self-isolating behaviors and how to stay connected at the same time to town services and a caring community.”

Your editorial’s criticism of the Select Board’s emergency declaration and its joint statement with the Board of Health is also unproductive.

The emergency declaration adopted by the Select Board was written by our town counsel, KP Law, and adopted in numerous communities statewide. The purpose, following the governor’s lead, is to make Truro eligible for federal disaster aid. The proclamation is not the vehicle for providing information that is readily available on the town’s COVID-19 web page.

The Select Board’s statement, in conjunction with the Board of Health, was intended to address concerns raised in Truro -- and Cape-wide -- about part-time residents coming to wait out the virus in town. Resort communities nationwide are struggling with this same issue. Whether you agree with the message or not, its intent was to let people know that medical resources, groceries and supplies are less available here right now. The statement followed the governor’s guidance to avoid unnecessary travel and his instruction that all travelers to the state are to self-quarantine for 14 days.

The news story published in the same edition as this editorial contains several inaccuracies. First, Truro has not been conducting regulatory meetings via telephone conference calls. After two emergency phone meetings, the town moved to the GoToMeeting video platform for Select Board and Board of Health meetings. These are available live on cable Channel 18. Some of the participants do not have access to cameras on their devices and therefore are not pictured in the cable TV version.

The Select Board apologizes to the public for the delay in getting set up for public participation, which is an essential part of our local government. We are waiting for a TRMS live-streamer server, which has been ordered but because of high demand we do not yet have a delivery date.

Contrary to your printed news story, Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer did not refuse to answer the reporter's question concerning the equipment needed. She provided the information to him prior to your deadline. While we appreciate the online correction, readers of your print publication received inaccurate information.

The Truro Select Board is working, in your words, to carry out a difficult job. And these are difficult times. While we are still working to allow public access to meetings, we have been diligent in providing resources, information and staff availability to all of our citizens.

Our communities need to rely on accurate, fact-based reporting and commentary.

Truro Select Board
Jan Worthington, Chair
Bob Weinstein, Vice-Chair
Susan Areson
Kristen Reed, Clerk
Stephanie Rein