

## Select Board Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2024, Budget Task Force (BTF) Meeting

Via Zoom Platform

Select Board Members Present: Susan Areson-Chair, Robert Weinstein-Vice Chair, Nancy Medoff-Clerk, Stephanie Rein-Member, Susan Girard-Irwin-Member

Select Board Members Absent:

Others Present: Darrin Tangeman-Town Manager, Kelly Clark-Assistant Town Manager, Alex Lessin-Finance Director, Jamie Calise-Chief of Police, Timothy Collins-Fire Chief, Trudi Brazil-Town Accountant, Paul Wisotzky-Town Moderator, Raphael Richter-Finance Committee Vice Chair, Michael Fee-Finance Committee Member, Michael Forgione (Truro Voter and Truro Resident)

Chair Areson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and noted that she had a quorum of Select Board members present (no names provided or roll call taken).

Chair Areson asked if the Finance Committee had a quorum of members present and Finance Committee Member Fee said that he and Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter were present, and Chair Areson instructed him to let her know if another Finance Committee member joined so a Finance Committee meeting could be opened.

Chair Areson then turned over the meeting to Finance Director Lessin who apologized for the change in time as there was a delay to get this meeting posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. Moving forward, the other BTF meetings will occur at 8:30 am.

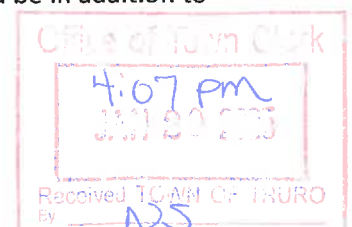
Finance Director Lessin provided an overview of the last BTF meeting and then reviewed the agenda for today's meeting:

1. Police
2. Fire & Rescue
3. Truro Emergency Management

### Police

Chief Calise reviewed the FY2026 Budget Narrative and highlighted the following topics: the organizational structure, an overview of requirements regarding Collective Bargaining Agreements and private contracts, requirements for law enforcement certification as set by the Massachusetts Police Officer Standards and Training Commission, recertification for police officers, professional development, a majority of the budget is associated with personnel costs, sponsorship of two academy recruits, and the body-worn camera program.

After the review of Chief Calise's budget narrative, Chair Areson confirmed with Chief Calise that the budget reflects step increases and any raises as a result of collective bargaining would be in addition to the step increases.



Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter confirmed with Chief Calise that the overall request was a 4.7% increase and was driven by salary (promotions, next steps, overtime rate, holiday rate, educational incentive, and shift differential).

Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter inquired as to the private contracts and Chief Calise summarized that the private contracts were for the chief, deputy chief, and lieutenant.

Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter asked if the police department was fully staffed and Chief Calise replied in the affirmative but noted that vacancies occur frequently. As such, Chief Calise added that he anticipates future vacancies. Chief Calise stated that there have been three new hires within the past year and the department has a turnover rate of about 10% which is consistent with other Cape Cod departments. Chief Calise noted that there are challenges in police department staff and that the Massachusetts State Police currently has 500 vacancies. Yarmouth has established a bonus program (between \$5,000 and \$10,000) to attract new officers and fill its vacancies.

Chief Calise confirmed to Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter that the department has 9 vehicles (8 cars and one police motorcycle).

Chief Calise also stated that only one police officer and one dispatcher reside in Truro. More than 50% of the police department's staff reside beyond the Orleans rotary. Housing is the largest challenge.

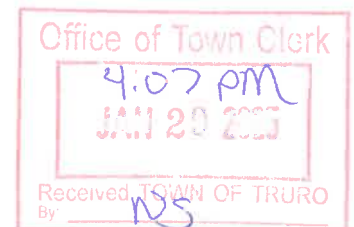
Mr. Forgione asked why there was not an animal control officer budgeted for FY2026 and there was one for the FY2025 budget. Chief Calise replied that the position had been reallocated to a dispatcher-telecommunicator as it is a much more critical position for public safety. A Truro police officer is in the process of receiving training as an animal control officer.

Chief Calise highlighted the following topics with the BTF members regarding the FY2026 Proposed: field training pay was cut by 33%; the two current academy recruits will graduate from the academy in February 2025 and will then undergo field training in Truro; a review of police officer academy training and field training; the reduction in field training in the FY2026 budget was a more realistic number after a two-year lookback of what had been spent on that line item previously; lab fees were reduced in the FY2026 budget as a result to identify other labs which offered the same services for significantly less cost; the body-camera program was reduced as a vendor was identified that charged less; a small increase of \$500 for the motorcycle lease; software for technology in order to conduct investigations is \$1,600 per year; the cost of vehicle fuel and vehicle tires were reduced; and medical supplies increased.

Chief Calise also reviewed workshops and conferences. Chief Calise specifically noted the FBI-Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (LEEDA) and the excellent training it provides. Chief Calise also stated that a Truro police officer was certified in accident reconstruction and another one was certified in firearms training.

Town Moderator Wisotzky asked about reimbursement grant funding and Chief Calise replied that 911 emergency medical dispatch is a grant outlay that is about \$50,000. Some of the money is also used for traffic programs. These programs are budgeted and later reimbursed.

The FY2026 Proposed for the Police Department is \$2,659,429 and is an increase of 4.7% from the FY2025 Budget.



## Fire & Rescue

Chief Collins reviewed the FY2026 Budget Narrative and highlighted the following topics: this has been a year of transition for the department; a little over a year since the fire department has assumed ambulance transportation for the Town; as of today, the Town has collected \$349,750 in ambulance receipts; the department has 19 staff members and there are currently 2 open positions; staffing has been problematic; the chief, the administrator, and one firefighter/paramedic reside in Truro; 9 live beyond the Orleans rotary and 4 live off Cape Cod; with the exception of salaries which are predominantly contractually driven, the department was able to level fund a majority of the fire department budget that yielded a 4% increase in the FY206 Proposed over the FY2025 Budget.

Chief Collins noted that the cost of supplies was unsure as a majority of the supplies come from outside the United States from external partners. Most of the supplies come from China and Japan.

Chief Collins also reviewed staffing levels and noted that there were 2 current vacancies.

Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter confirmed with Chief Collins that the last several years have been good for staff retention and that the culture was a positive draw to the department.

Finance Committee Vice Chair Richter asked if the projections on collections are looking good and how the collection rate looks. Fire Chief Collins replied that he did not have that information in front of him but he thought the collection rate was about 70%. Chief Collins will confirm with the billing company. Finance Director Lessin added that the Town was on track for collections now but that the Medicare billing rate impacts the cost that the Town can charge patients. Finance Director Lessin also agreed with Chief Collins that the collection rate was about 70%. Finance Director Lessin will confirm and report back with the information.

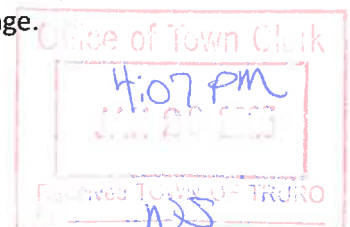
Chief Collins confirmed with Chair Areson that when a patient gets transported to the hospital the insurance company is billed and so does the patient for whatever the insurance does not cover.

Town Moderator Wisotzky asked Chief Collins to repeat where fire department staff members reside and Chief Collins provided that information as previously stated.

Mr. Forgione asked how Chief Collins felt about the fire department building and he said that it was good. That being said, the size of new apparatuses have increased so that is a consideration for the department when exploring new apparatuses and how they will be garaged. Chief Collins said that he would like to eventually see the bunkroom be modified to accommodate individual quarters for the firefighters/paramedics.

Chief Collins said that he increased salaries and training coverage by 5% over the FY2025 Budget. Chief Collins noted that education incentive pay is new. Uniforms were reduced. One of the fire engines is 28 years old and will eventually have to be replaced. The buildout for a new fire engine is 3-4 years. This issue with an aging fleet is the difficulty in finding and purchasing replacement parts.

Regarding lodging expenses for attendance at the fire academy, Finance Director Lessin noted that the cost could be reduced as some individuals prefer to drive to and from the academy every day versus lodging. This is less cost compared to lodging and the Town will reimburse for mileage.



The FY2026 Projected for the Fire Department is \$2,714,899 and is a 4% increase over the FY2025 Budget.

### **Truro Emergency Management**

Chief Collins stated that this budget was level funded and there was a 0% increase in the FY2026 Projected compared to the FY2025 Budget, as Provincetown maintains a shelter and Truro stocks the shelter. There were no questions or comments made.

The FY2026 Projected budget for the Truro Emergency Management is \$17,425.

After Chief Collins' presentation, Finance Director Lessin announced that the next BTF meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 8:30 am. The following departments will present their proposed budgets at that meeting: Building Inspection, Planning, Health and Conservation, and Community Services.

Town Accountant Brazil commented on the question raised by Town Moderator Wisotzky regarding the grant reimbursement line item in the Police Department's budget currently at \$60,000. Town Accountant Brazil said that the figure is a net figure. During FY2024, a total of \$55,200 was spent out of that \$60,000 and of which the Town received a reimbursement of \$37,000. This left \$5,700 as unreimbursed.

Finance Director Lessin noted that he posted questions and answers (where applicable) on ClearGov under the "Budget Overview" tab.

**Member Girard-Irwin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 am.**

**Chair Areson seconded the motion.**

**By unanimous vote, the motion passed.**

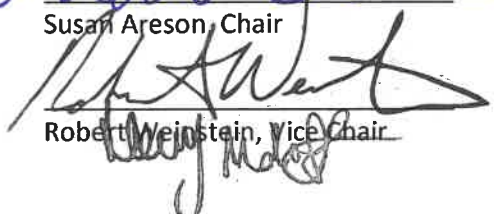
Respectfully submitted,



Alexander O. Powers  
Board/Committee/Commission Support Staff



Susan Areson, Chair



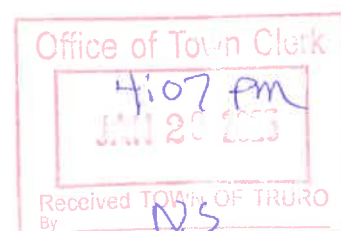
Robert Weinstein, Vice Chair



Nancy Medoff, Clerk



Stephanie Rein, Member



*Susan Girard-Irwin*

Susan Girard-Irwin, Member

**Public Records Material Attachment**

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