

**Truro Select Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2020
Remote Meeting**

Select Board Members Attending: Susan Areson, Kristen Reed, Stephanie Rein, Robert Weinstein

Regrets: Janet Worthington

Attending: Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer; Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark; Health Agent Emily Beebe; DPW Director Jarrod Cabral; Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director Timothy Collins, Community Paradigm Associates Consultant Bernard Lynch

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. and introduced the Select Board members and other parties attending the virtual meeting. He explained how the public could participate by phone, entering the access code which he provided. The public was also invited to e-mail comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one called into the virtual meeting to offer public comment.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Town Manger explained that most of the staff is working remotely but are available for phone calls and e-mail communication. The DPW, Fire and Police Departments are working as usual. Health Agent Emily Beebe discussed Massachusetts' high numbers in the Covid-19 surge. She said the virus is very different from the seasonal flu and should not be minimized. It is so contagious, the number of cases has rapidly increased. She said it is essential to continue social distancing and wearing cloth masks. The Town needs to work with businesses to ensure public safety. Ms. Beebe cited the increase in cases from March until the present. She said there have been questions about reopening and about the designation of essential services. She continues to work with her peers and the Department of Public Health (DPH). She has plans to have a joint Covid-19 Facebook page with Wellfleet as the "Spokespersons for Health" offering more information to the public.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein emphasized the importance of wearing masks. Epidemiologists have said people can be asymptomatic, so your mask protects others and their masks protect you. Barnstable County cases are approaching the 700s, and Massachusetts now ranks third in states with the most cases. He cautioned about the unknown number of asymptomatic cases. He thanked Town personnel who have worked to keep the community safe.

Select Board Member Kristen Reed asked Health Agent Beebe if the added cases reported in Barnstable County reflect numbers from a Brewster nursing home. She also inquired about cases in Truro. Ms. Beebe reported that there were two active cases, seven in recovery and several people in quarantine in Truro.

Emergency Management Director Timothy Collins reported that Truro is continuing to get personal protective equipment (PPE) and working to protect the public.

Select Board Member Susan Areson, on behalf of Janet Worthington, asked about methods of distributing masks to townspeople who would like to get them. She said that Ms. Worthington was concerned about older residents who are not online and did not have access to information on masks. Town Manager Palmer said that she will work with COA Director Mary Elizabeth Briscoe to get information and masks to that part of the population. Vice Chair Robert Weinstein added that he had seen a sign in Orleans advertising masks from Lynn's Alterations.

Ms. Palmer said that post office is offering an Informed Delivery service that allows people to preview what is in their mailbox, so they can decide whether they need to go to the post office to get it. To sign up, people should go to USPS.com, she said.

Board Member Kristen Reed mentioned Governor Baker's decision that the State needs 14 days of steady decline in cases before considering reopening. Truro will be taking direction from the Governor.

SELECT BOARD ACTION

Executive Session on April 14, 2020 Decision

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein reported on the Executive Session of April 14, 2020. He said that Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer had agreed to continue as Town Manager for three months before her intended retirement date of June 30, 2020. She has agreed to a three-month contract with the Town that will extend her service to September 30, 2020. Board Member Susan Areson said that one of the missions of the Select Board is to continue the search for a new Town Manager, but that is an agenda item later in the meeting.

Discussion of FY 2021 Budget

Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer and Town Accountant Trudi Brazil have been looking at Fiscal Year 2021 and 2022 budgets with concern over reduced revenues with the possibility of a shortened season or no season this summer. It appears that the Town could make it through FY2021 with the budget prepared for Annual Town Meeting. After making a very preliminary assessment of revenues, Town Accountant Trudi Brazil discussed adjusting the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget before going to Town Meeting. She is examining the possible impact of an extended pandemic period on revenues, but she does not have answers yet since that is too difficult to forecast. Areas of concern include short term rentals, the hotel tax and the meals tax, Town Manager Palmer said. A levelling off period from the pandemic and having businesses reopen would offer some relief. The Chamber of Commerce has asked about waiving licensing fees and has asked the Town to join them in requesting that legislators suspend the meals tax. These financial considerations will be an agenda item for another meeting, Ms. Palmer said. The Select Board's May meeting will reconsider what should be included in the Town Meeting Warrant. Right now, other than Covid-related expenses, there is a freeze on expenditures for FY2020, she said.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein expressed his concern about unemployed locals. This could affect residents' ability to pay real estate taxes, he said. He does not think that the Town will be able to

count on revenue from the Harbor and businesses. He said economists predict it will take time to get back on a normal footing. He said the ripple effect in Truro for restaurants and suppliers should be another future agenda item. Board Member Susan Areson said there would be ripple effect in the Recreation Department as well. She questioned if Recreation would be able to run their programs because more staffing would be needed to maintain self-distancing. She suggested setting future meeting dates to make more educated guesses about the Recreation program.

Board Member Kristen Reed expressed empathy that Town Manager Palmer and Town Accountant Trudi Brazil would have to take a new look at finances after the departments had trimmed back so much in the budget sessions. She said she has no idea yet on the impact on Truro businesses, but she hoped the Town could figure out ways to minimize the budget. Board Member Reed asked Town Manager Palmer about the process of guiding Town departments through a reconsideration of their budgets. Town Manager Palmer noted that school is closed for the rest of the year. The Town Recreation program helps younger families on the Lower Cape, but everything will have to be reexamined even though the budget has already been cut close to the bone, she said. The Free Cash numbers might not be as good as they had thought. If the Select Board approved, capital requests could be postponed but not spent until the money was there for them, Town Manager Palmer said. No one could have anticipated the situation we are experiencing, she concluded.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein commented on the boating season and Connecticut's decision. An Upper Cape town has opened its harbor as an essential business. Deciding upon what is essential is a state by state choice. Michigan, however, did not consider boating and fishing as essential, he said. Vice Chair Weinstein expressed the hope that Truro Harbor could operate all areas safely.

Board Member Susan Areson said she hoped the Select Board and Town would promote policies that allow people to recreate outdoors as much as possible as long as they distance and are safe. She said the Town should make an effort to accommodate people. Getting outside keeps everyone sane. Decisions are not just about the money, she said. Vice Chair Weinstein concurred, and Town Manager Palmer said that opening the harbor supplies food since fishing is considered an essential business. Board Member Susan Areson added that the Town will have to consider how to keep conditions there safe as the weather gets better.

Board Member Kristen Reed asked about meeting with the Finance Committee, but Town Manager Palmer recommended working with staff and departments first. Board Member Susan Areson suggested holding a joint meeting with the Finance Committee after the Select Board's May 5th meeting, which would be the day after the Governor's next big announcement on State plans.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein asked Health Agent Emily Beebe about current directives from the Commonwealth and the Department of Public Health about the continuance of outdoor recreational opportunities. Health Agent Beebe said that she had received guidance, which included harbor consideration. The Governor had considered fishing an essential business

because it puts food on the table. Harbor Master Tony Jackett is keeping up with State guidance, she said, but it is important to return to public spaces carefully and to stay safe.

Annual Town Meeting Date and Scope

Town Manager Palmer said that she is waiting for more guidance from the Governor, but she suggested setting a Town Meeting date for June. She said either June 16th or June 23rd would be suitable dates. Realistically, she did not think it would be possible to hold Annual Town Meeting before these dates. She had discussed postponing the zoning bylaw Warrant Articles for a fall Special Town Meeting. Planning Board Chair Ann Greenbaum had agreed to that plan. A virtual Town Meeting would not be fair to people who do not have internet access. Other possibilities were holding Town Meeting in an outside area with appropriate distancing or, if possible, mail-in voting on the Warrant Articles.

Board Member Kristen Reed said she favored some adaptation for Town Meeting but was interested in choosing a range of options if weather conditions were not favorable. She agreed that a virtual Town Meeting would not allow everyone to participate, especially because of citizens who do not have internet access. She, Board Member Areson and Board Member Rein concurred that June 23, the later date, was preferable for holding Town Meeting. Board Member Stephanie Rein said that a virtual meeting had limitations as did mail. She wasn't sure why the Warrant needed to be abbreviated if a safe space was provided for the Town Meeting. Town Manager Palmer said a truncated Town Meeting would minimize the amount of time people were gathered, even with social distancing. At this time, Town Manager Palmer only wanted to set the date. She said that the Select Board could make a decision on May 5th as to which Warrant Articles should be included for Annual Town Meeting. Board Member Stephanie Rein said she understood that budget was of primary concern.

Board Member Susan Areson moved to set the Annual Town Meeting date for June 23, 2020. Board Member Stephanie Rein seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Date of Town Election

Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark explained the schedule for holding the Annual Town Election before June 30, 2020. She said June 23, 2020 was set aside for Annual Town Meeting. The Annual Town Election date has to be set at least 20 days prior to holding the election. People may vote by mail in advance or use absentee ballots. The physical polling option will be available but with a shortened time period, she said.

Board Member Kristen Reed moved to set the Annual Town Election date for June 30, 2020. Board Member Susan Areson seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Town Manager Search Committee

Bernard Lynch, Principal of Community Paradigm Associates, said resumes have been in place for around five weeks but have been on hold because of Covid-19. Out of approximately 29 initial applications, 25 now remain. Mr. Lynch said that one or two applicants had withdrawn because of the pandemic, and one had previously withdrawn. Of the remaining candidates he has contacted to ask about their continued interest, 21 have said yes. He suggested that Truro form its selection committee by the beginning of May to keep that pool of candidates in place.

The committee would then be able to conduct some remote interviews of Town Manager candidates to narrow down the field to three to four finalists by June. That is, provided live interviews would be possible in June, he said. The Select Board could choose the next Town Manager by mid-July, according to Mr. Lynch.

Board Member Susan Areson said she had not yet received a copy of the updated timeline. She doubted that the selection committee could be ready by the beginning of May. Because the Select Board still needs to interview more applicants for the committee, Board Member Areson considered mid-May a more likely time to have the committee in place. She proposed increasing the number of members on the selection committee from seven to nine with six people from the public. She said arrangements could be made for one or two days of remote interviews of other applicants for the selection committee. Mr. Lynch said that further delay would run the risk of losing more Town Manager candidates. He mentioned another community who had reduced the number of members on the selection board, the opposite of Ms. Areson's proposal. He didn't know what the Town would be willing to do remotely, but he thought remote interviews for the selection committee could be completed by the end of May. He said it was important that the Town Manager interviews be done in person.

Board Member Kristen Reed questioned when the additional interviews could be done, but she said she didn't understand why more search committee members would be necessary. She said the dates of May 5th and 12th would work for completing the selection committee interviews. She underlined the importance of allowing time for the planned overlap of the new Town Manager and Town Manager Palmer. Board Member Susan Areson noted that May 5th and 12th were the dates she had suggested for the interviews so that the Select Board could make a decision. What she was very interested in, she said, was more public participation in the process. The Select Board has already interviewed four people for the committee, and there are three that remain to be interviewed. She said it would be fair to interview everyone who had applied.

Town Manager Palmer said there are only three remaining candidates for the selection committee. She asked if the Select Board would be interested in having another interview at the April 28th meeting. Everyone concurred, and Board Member Stephanie Rein said she now agrees that conducting remote interviews, as soon as possible, was the best approach.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein agreed that encouraging more participation by the public was a good idea, but he did not necessarily advocate for more candidates for the selection committee. He said the same questions should be asked in the second round of remote interviews. He would like to take advantage of largest number of Town Manager candidates, so a mid-May date for establishing the selection committee would help. He urged anyone interested in being on the selection committee to step forward. He only knows of the three applicants that Town Manager Palmer had mentioned.

Board Member Susan Areson asked if she was the only one who thought the number on the committee should be increased. She said the Select Board had interviewed six people and have three more yet to be interviewed. She mentioned that among those who have been interviewed so far were new people who seemed interested in getting involved. She wanted to encourage this, so she wanted five people from the public instead of three to be chosen for the selection

committee. Town Manager Palmer said she had discussed an increase with Select Board Chair Janet Worthington, who may support Susan Areson's request for more members on the selection committee. Town Manager Palmer said the Select Board did not need to decide about increasing the number at the present meeting.

Town Manager Palmer summarized that there would be another interview for the selection committee on April 28th and a discussion of a larger size for it on May 5th. There are no new selection committee applications. Town Manager Palmer said no motion is needed at this meeting. She said if the remaining interviews can be done on April 28th, the committee could be in place by May, provided it gets onto the May 5th meeting agenda for the appointment decisions. Vice Chair Robert Weinstein recommended getting the available dates from the applicants for their remote interviews, so that no one is overlooked. Select Board members were in agreement. Mr. Lynch said he had built some flexibility into the schedule, but he still plans for an overlap of Town Manager Palmer with new Town Manager in September. Town Manager Palmer e-mailed the revised schedule to the Select Board during the meeting, she said. Vice Chair Robert Weinstein and Board Member Kristen Reed thanked Mr. Lynch for his participation in the Town Manager search process and in today's meeting.

Reopening

Chair Janet Worthington had wanted to make the public aware of activity in the business community, and Vice Chair Weinstein read the list of open businesses from the Truro Chamber of Commerce. The list included takeout, delivery, curbside pickup and shipping methods for various businesses. It included a few businesses outside of Truro, including non-profits, health services, fuel, banking, insurance, cleaning, web, landscaping, construction, electric and real estate. Board Member Kristen Reed discussed other communities that have posted business information on their websites. She had compiled a list that included neighboring Wellfleet and Provincetown businesses along with Truro businesses. She added them to the Chamber of Commerce list to make it more comprehensive. It is an active document, she said, because more businesses are figuring out what they can manage to do. She suggested posting the list on the Town website.

Board Member Stephanie Rein asked for a mechanism for business to add themselves onto the list. Town Manager Palmer asked businesses to contact Town staff and said the more information the Town has, the better they can help the businesses. Board Member Susan Areson said there are other businesses that are not on the Chamber's or Board Member Reed's list. She said the businesses should add their phone numbers. She did not care which town the business was from; helping the businesses was foremost. Vice Chair Robert Weinstein said he hoped to see all fuel delivery services included in a future list. Town Manager Palmer added the Truro Part Time Residents' Taxpayer Association's list of errand and delivery services and the Truro Community Kitchen, which provides hot meals on Sundays. Board Member Susan Areson suggested additional real estate and trash pick-up businesses. Board Member Stephanie Rein urged businesses to contact the Town to be included. She suggested that gas station hours be included in the list.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Review/Approve and Authorize Signature: *None*

B. Review and Approve Use of ABCC Transportation and Delivery Permit for Salty Market and Days Market and Deli

C. Review and Approve Select Board Minutes-March 31, 2020

Board Member Susan Areson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Board Member Kristen Reed seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

SELECT BOARD REPORTS/COMMENTS

Board Member Susan Areson said it was good to see people out at the beaches and to see them adhere to social distancing. She appreciated that the DPW had placed the signs at the parking lots. Board Member Stephanie Rein said she was proud of the community for social distancing. She said when the Select Board discusses reopening, business owners should receive notice so they could participate in planning. Board Member Kristen Reed advertised the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Fund, a website for the self-employed who are in need. Vice Chair Robert Weinstein thanked all Truro staff members and called attention to the signboards on the highway providing information Covid-19 updates and giving advisories to travelers to Truro.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Palmer reported that there have been many calls and inquiries about short-term rentals. People are commenting on out of state cars. She said that people arriving in Truro should self-quarantine for 14 days. If neighbors have concerns, they should call Health Agent Emily Beebe. She has continued discussion with National Seashore Superintendent Brian Carlstrom and has heard from the Chamber of Commerce. She believes there will be a return to a "new normal" and reminded the public that Town Hall services continue even when the building is closed to the public.

NEXT MEETING

Town Manager Palmer reviewed the agenda items for the April 28, 2020 meeting: Little Pamet engineering, candidates for search committee, licenses and the Town Manager selection committee.

Vice Chair Robert Weinstein said that \$40,000,000 is available to trace the spread of Covid-19, and the state is hiring people to do the contact tracing. Information on the employment opportunity is available at Mass.gov website. He will send more information to Town Manager Palmer for greater dissemination.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Member Susan Areson moved to adjourn. Board Member Stephanie Rein seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Rogers,
Secretary



Town Manager ~~Rae Ann Palmer~~

Signing on behalf of the Truro Select Board

Public Records material of 4/21/2020

1. Annual Town Election notice 2020
2. List of businesses and services available in Truro
3. ABCC Transportation and Delivery Permit for Salty Market and Days Market and Deli

