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NON-RESIDENT
TAXPAYERS'
ASSOCIATION

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Minutes of Sixteenth Annual Meeting Truro Community Center- July 2, 2011

Citing a quorum, **TNRTA President Regan McCarthy** opened the meeting and introduced existing board members to an assembly of more than 60 attendees. She also introduced guests **Massachusetts State Representative Sarah Peake, Curtis Hartman, Chair of the Town Board of Selectmen, and John Lundborn, Chief of Police.**

The minutes of last year's meeting, which had been distributed, were approved.

The current TNRTA Board officers will continue in their positions in 2011-2012.

TNRTA continues to maintain a robust and steady membership, and the organization is in sound financial condition.

In her remarks, **Regan McCarthy** announced that the organization's website had been completely revamped and invited all to "visit" it. She mentioned the very active support TNRTA has provided, making a difference in local cultural and community activities. For example, in FY 2011 TNRTA was actively engaged in the committees for Economic Development, Town Administrator Selection and Police Chief Selection as well as efforts to address continued severe erosion of beaches. In particular TNRTA aided the Ballston Beach Dune Restoration effort coordinated by Friends of the CCNS and Safe Harbor Environmental. Members provided over 80% of the funding, half of the volunteers, and located all of the 30,000 grass plugs needed and obtained them at a fraction of the original bid to Safe Harbor. TNRTA also made cash contributions to Outer Cape Health Services, the Truro AgFair Children's Community Garden Program, Payomet Arts Center and Castle Hill Center for the Arts. As usual, we have helped the Truro Scholarship Fund by including a convenient check off box for members to make a contribution to this worthy program.

FY 2011-12 witnessed severe erosion of Truro beaches on bay and ocean sides. Since this is of such significance to all, TNRTA will host a Forum on the topic in August, open to all, involving experts from organizations such as Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, the Truro Conservation Commission, the Center for Coastal Studies and other experts.

The issue of building development continues to be an important one. There is general agreement that building size needs to be regulated in some way. However, despite a simple majority of votes over the past three Annual Town Meetings for such regulation, recent proposals of regulations have failed to reach the required 2/3 majority at Town Meeting. We will continue to work with various parties involving varied vested interests to develop zoning and lot coverage rules that make sense, are broadly acceptable, and that are enforceable.

The issue of property value assessment was discussed and raised many questions about the process and access to the criteria used for evaluations.

State Representative, **Sarah Peake** represents seven towns of the outer and lower Cape. She recently was appointed State House Chair of the Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development, all issues that are so important to the entire state and the outer Cape in particular. At present she and the Committee are in information gathering mode and will have more to report in the future.

Rep. Peake also reported that she and State Senator Robert O'Leary have put forth a Homeowners Insurance Reform bill aimed at controlling cost increases in premiums to both regular insurance and Fair Plan programs. Insurance companies have deemed the Cape vulnerable to hurricane wind and flood damage and therefore seek steep premium increases. Proposed legislation would force insurers to demonstrate how and why the Cape area is vulnerable when this has not been an issue historically. It also calls for discounting in cases where storm proofing measures have been taken. The bill also empowers the State Attorney to get data from insurers.

Truro Selectman Chair, **Curtis Hartmann** thanked TNRTA for its service to the Town. He said the Town was in good financial shape, managing expenses closely without reduction in service, despite a year of great transition. He discussed the extended illness and resignation of former Town Administrator Pam Nolan, the selection of a new TA and the recent change in Chief of Police as well as prospective organizational changes for Public Safety and Fire Protection services overall.

The Town Finance Committee and BOS review budgets department by department and almost line by line to ensure proper financial management and to seek economies. Apart from labor-related costs they have determined that energy costs are a significant issue. The Town has audited all vehicles and buildings and is promoting a program to reduce energy costs by 20% over the next few years. They are looking at solar power and state sponsored "green programs". In addition the Town continues to seek candidate areas of service for regionalization partnerships with other towns. Prudent expense management is always prudent but particularly necessary at this time because revenues from fees and taxes may soften due to broader economic conditions. Other economic benefits could come from possible move of the Dept of Public Works from Town Hall Hill and sale of that property.

Hartmann addressed the recent \$2.75MM lease agreement on a new wellhead which would serve as an emergency water source for Provincetown and parts of North Truro. Terms of the lease call for Provincetown to pay \$55,000 per year for 50 years for access to the emergency water supply. In addition and very importantly Truro will have 3 of the seven seats on the Water Supply Board, including veto authority over expenditures exceeding \$5,000. Studies of water usage in Provincetown suggest that 30% of the water supply is lost before it gets to users. With an eye toward reducing leaks, waste and unauthorized use, the Board is hoping to reduce the unnecessary loss of this highly valuable resource to 12.5%.

Recently appointed Police Chief, **John Lundborn** was introduced and spoke of the need for a more open Police Department and briefly spoke about several Police safety programs such as security key lock boxes (which give public safety officers access to homes in emergencies) and the need for house numbers.

Q&A and discussion from members focused on beach erosion, the noise and disturbance caused by trucking of sand and abatement materials to beaches via Corn Hill, property assessment criteria, safety issues connected with some abandoned property, and the effects on water supply around North Union Field area when new Town wellhead is in.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM

Submitted by

Frank Korahais, Board Secretary