



TRURO
NON-RESIDENT
TAXPAYERS'
ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 324 • Truro • MA, 02666
www.tnrta.org • info@tnrta.org

NEWSLETTER

Spring / Summer 2011

Letter from the President

Dear Neighbors,

Spring 2011 arrived in Truro on the heels of a heavy winter that caused continuing coastal erosion in a few parts of Truro. Despite heavy rains and erratic temperatures through May we have seen great beauty, as always, and new natural challenges in our spectacular Town.

Operationally, the Town had a challenging Winter and Spring as well. Two senior posts in Town - Police Chief and the Town Administrator - remained or became open, and searches for the right persons to fill these critical positions became important tasks to complete. TNRTA has been active in both searches. The (essentially flat) budget for FY 2012 was under tight scrutiny by Town officials, the Finance Committee, TNRTA, and ultimately the voters, as economic pressures competed with increased costs of doing the Town's business. Property reassessments are now completed, causing sticker shock in some cases and relief to others. The Property Tax Rate increased 5.6%. While overall values of Truro land fell, valuations in specific areas increased significantly, raising many questions about property valuations.

A controversial article, hotly and publicly debated this winter, was proposed to eliminate the entire Truro Conservation Bylaw, contending that the Conservation Commission which implements this bylaw fails to work with coastal homeowners to adapt innovative erosion remediation measures. Elimination of the Bylaw would have placed conservation-related authority primarily with the Commonwealth and eliminated the Town's role in this area. Supporters of the by-law, including TNRTA, countered that this proposal was misguided, that the Bylaw now puts these matters squarely in local control, and that the serious threats to our coastline and our aquifer (and thus,

our drinking water) require well-crafted and enforceable local solutions that benefit everyone. Further, in the short time since its passage, the Bylaw has proven an effective tool by which the Town can implement emergency repairs to public beaches and coastal areas. I am happy to report that voters resoundingly supported the Conservation Bylaw and rejected this article.

Town voters faced other interesting matters to consider at All Town Meeting (ATM). Among them were a Solar Farm at the Town Dump, another crack at regulating house size, and extension of the use period by condo owners by one month, among others. All but the house size articles passed easily. House size regulation seems to be one area where the Town's view is not bi-partisan, but bi-polar: the overwhelming sentiment of Town residents - voters and non-voters alike - is that reasonable house size regulation is needed and in our interests. But for three years running, a small but vocal group of folks say that whatever is proposed is either too simple or too complex, and is therefore confusing, unclear and/or unenforceable. Each time, the voters achieve a simple majority but not the super-majority (2/3 majority) needed to pass zoning articles. Someday soon we will hopefully work our way out of this split state of mind so that the community achieves what it wants - sensible house size regulations.

In May, the voters also elected several new folks to Town bodies: Breon Dunigan won a first-time seat on the Board of

Selectmen. John Pendleton was a write-in winner of a Planning Board seat. Others retained their seats: Monica Kraft as Town Moderator, Bill Worthington, Greg Morris and Skip (Leo) Childs on the Planning Board, and Theresa Humes on the School Committee. Congratulations!

This year, Truro loses some long-serving officials, among them Chris Lucy, who served as Selectmen for 9 years, and Pam Nolan, Town Administrator for 6 years. We thank them for their service and for their fair consideration of the issues and concerns of seasonal residents. We look forward to working with all those who will continue - or begin - to serve as Town officials going forward. Congratulations to Chief Lundborn on his permanent appointment as Police Chief, too!

More information on these and other items of interest follow inside. More news can be found at our NEW website at www.tnrta.org. As always, please feel free to contact us anytime with your views, concerns, and questions by email at tnrta@tnrta.org.

Best Wishes,
Regan McCarthy, President

TNRTA's Local Business Directory

TNRTA will launch a free, online and downloadable Truro BizList before summer and will produce printed copies thereafter. Local businesses have responded vigorously, and we have extended the deadline and the online launch date until early June. We believe that the best way to help local businesses is to make sure they are known to seasonal and year-round residents, visitors and prospective homeowners of Truro and the area. We are hoping to eventually include any and all business operations in Truro that provide goods and/or services to customers or clients. If you own or operate a business in Truro, please join this list by going to our website at www.tnrta.org

Town Meeting / Town Vote

Truro's Annual Town Meeting, held on April 28th, presented 29 articles for vote. Highlights follow here:

The Budget for FY 2012: Voters passed the budget in the amount of \$15,496,766.18, representing a ½ percent decrease over FY 2011 (approved at \$15,576,953 last year). This minor reduction to an essentially flat proposal of \$15,606,766 for this year was due to the withdrawal from the Operating Capital Account of a request for \$110,000 for boiler replacement at the Truro Elementary School. Voters again flew through the budget and related articles this year, passing Omnibus Budget without contention. Only a few budget items merited any discussion. COLA figures for Town employees were set at 1% this year. Prior to the meeting, a preliminary request for additional fire equipment and expenses had been declined. Voters approved the amount requested in the published Town warrant.

Voters APPROVED specific articles of interest, including:

Solar Farm Array and related articles: Voters approved a setoff four articles related to creating a Solar Panel "farm" at the Transfer Station. Passage of these articles will permit the Town to be designated as a "green community" and thereby become eligible for related State funding.

Capital Projects: The voters approved a few capital projects – for engineering and repairs of the Town-owned culvert under Corn Hill (\$50,000); development of a Comprehensive Waste Water Management Plan, required by the State (\$125,000), and to seek funds to defray these costs and reduce eventual outlay accordingly; repair of the Pamet Harbor Jetty (\$491,406), with conditions amended on the floor.

Extended Condo Use Period: Voters approved extending the period of condo/cottage use by one month, to begin March 1 each year. However, Town vote is not sufficient to permit condo users to begin use on March 1. Further action by each condo association to approve this change and incorporate it into their own bylaws, to amend their covenants with Town, and to seek applicable special permits are additional steps which must proceed extended use. Individual condo owners may not use their units before April 1 unless their entire association adopts and enacts applicable measures noted.

Affordable Housing: Voters approved that the Town file a home rule petition in the General Court to establish a property tax exemption for rental properties restricted for use as affordable housing. This would be subject to Town vote in the future. Highland Affordable Housing requested \$225,000 to acquire a parcel of land suitable to place a house donated and constructed by Habitat for Humanity subject to a permanent affordable housing deed restriction. Community Housing Resources Inc. requested \$250,000 to be set aside in a reserve fund for the construction of 16 affordable housing units at Sally's Way. This fund would only be used if other funding for the project in hand is exhausted.

Truro Scholarship Winners 2011-12

TNRTA members contributed generously this year to the Truro Scholarship Awards, granted this year to **Chloe Hanelt** and **Sacha Ferrier-Cohen**. Chloe is a member of the National Honor Society, Student Senate, the environmental Green Club, and the Varsity Tennis Team at Nauset Regional HS. Chloe has also tutored and participated in many volunteer activities involving young children in Truro. Sacha is a member of the National Honor Society and the Model U.N. program. A Student Senator and School Treasurer, he is active on Nauset's golf, basketball and tennis teams. He also volunteers as a coach and referee with the Truro Recreation Department. Thanks for supporting these great students and this program!

Historic Preservation: Voters approved \$61,487 for three projects: \$7,275 for map restoration and preservation by the Truro Historical Society; \$27,212 to finish the restoration of Snow's Barn at Castle Hill (subject to deed restrictions); and \$7000 for administrative costs of the Community Preservation Committee.

Flood Plain Articles: Voters approved two articles related to the definition of flood plains that will permit Truro to continue to participate in federal Flood Insurance programs.

End Warfare Funding: Voters approved an article which directs the Town of Truro to inform its Congressional Rep. to oppose and seek termination of all federal funding of the military activity in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Opposing "Citizens United" decision: Voters approved an article calling for adoption of a non-binding resolution seeking a constitutional amendment to restore the First Amendment protections for individuals, effectively denying corporations the designation as "persons", accordingly granted free speech rights in the recent Supreme Court decision of 2010, *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*. The Town must send this resolution to State and Federal elected officials and the US President, and to seek related action through the MA. General Court.

All House Size Regulation Articles: Three articles attempting to regulate house size failed to be adopted for very different reasons. The first article, simplest of the three, was rejected because it would permit house sizes in excess of 19,000 sq. ft throughout Town. Voters felt this was simply too large and effectively represented no regulation – or worse, an invitation to build exceedingly large houses. The second article was a simpler version of the "Maximum Bulk" article that nearly passed last year, and applicable only to new structures or alterations that break an exterior wall. This article lacked a definition of "habitable" and caused difficulty in calculating applicable square footage. The third article was like the second but set only a cap. Both passed by simple majority but not super majority as required for zoning articles.

Voters REJECTED or withdrew the following articles:

Deletion of the Conservation Bylaw in its Entirety: This article was resoundingly rejected by the voters.

Medicare Option: A controversial article was indefinitely postponed to see if voters would approve the adoption of provisions in state law which effectively would require all retired Town employees eligible for Medicare to transfer to a Medicare extension program offered by the Town as a way to reduce the Town's pension fund obligations.

Utility Easement for North Truro Camping Areas: This article was hotly debated, in part because of confusion over the article's mandate. The article sought approval for the BoS to enter into an agreement to create a utility easement that would permit construction and placement of a sewer pipe serving two campgrounds to run to a nearby sand pit. Voters raised concerns about the potentially adverse impact of the underlying sewer project and rejected any action concerning an easement for one.

More Town News

Truro Selects Its Police Chief

On April 14th, the Board of Selectmen chose Acting Chief John Lundborn to become the next Police Chief of Truro. Chief Lundborn was one of three finalists recommended to the BoS by the Police Chief Search Committee, which conducted an extensive and open search over a 9-month period that whittled the finalists' pool from 62 applicants. The three finalists who emerged from this process included two internal candidates, Acting Chief John Lundborn and Sgt. Kyle Takakjian. Both officers, given serious consideration by the BoS, were impressive throughout the search process and demonstrated their strength in policing and leadership. Chief Lundborn, whose experience and success in the role as Acting Chief proved determinative, vacates his former position as Lieutenant with this appointment and will select his replacement after being sworn in on June 3.

Truro Recycling

Truro will now accept REAL used corks for recycling. May sound like a small thing, but real corks can now be converted into useful composite materials, so recycle them, please!

Truro Begins Search For New Town Administrator

In March, the BoS established the Town Administrator Search Committee (TASC) whose job is to identify a short list of viable finalists for BoS selection of the next TA. The Committee has received 45 applications, an impressive response. No internal candidates applied, so the next TA will definitely be new to Truro. The TASC seeks community input on the criteria for selecting the new TA, so please send your thoughts to tnrta@tnrta.org or go to our website at www.tnrta.org to complete a brief survey.

Truro's Cultural Harvest

Truro will have a packed season of cultural events, including a great schedule at Payomet (www.ppac.org) and at Castle Hill (www.castlehill.org), Concerts on the Green, the Truro Ag Fair (www.truroagfair.com) and more including events to support our great Truro Library: The Friends of the Truro Library will have a fun Tag Sale on July 17, 2011. This is a great opportunity to bring items from your home(s) to donate for this Tag Sale. For information on how to do contribute items (no clothes or videotapes, please), or for general information on cultural events in Town, check the Truro Library website at www.trurolibrary.org/calendar.



Ballston Beach Dune Restoration Project

In March, TNRTA was asked to provide financial and volunteer assistance to an emergency project designed to rebuild the critical dunes at Ballston Beach which protect the head of the Pamet River from salt-water "overwashes." Ongoing erosion caused by heavy foot traffic and pounding winter wave action caused near-irreversible damage. Led by Safe Harbor Environmental of Wellfleet, this community partnership includes TNRTA, the Truro Conservation Commission, Truro Beach Commission, Truro Department of Public Works, Cape Cod National Seashore and The Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore. TNRTA and its members responded enthusiastically to this call, and have provided over two thirds of the funds raised for this effort. TNRTA also located the 30,000 stems of

beach grass needed for this project after learning that no supplies of the proper beachgrass were available in time or at an affordable price. TNRTA assisted in identifying volunteers to join in the Community Planting days on May 14 and 21, 2011. Mac Hays (of Mac's Seafood fame) was also a generous contributor, and FCCNS volunteers put most of the boots on the ground for these planting days. Additional planting may be needed in November, so stay tuned!

**Please Contribute Your Experience and Skills!
Join and Become an Active Member of TNRTA**

RENEW your membership today or become a NEW MEMBER. Send a completed membership form (enclosed below) with dues to TNRTA. Dues are \$35 per household annually. Contributions appreciated.

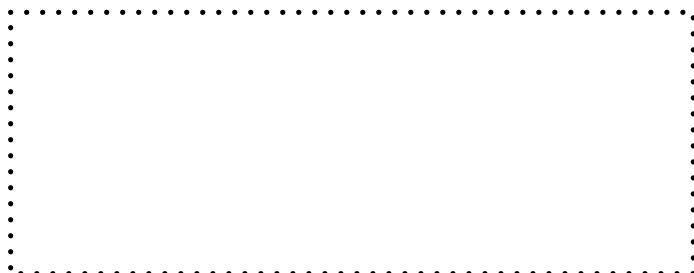


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Name(s)					
Permanent Address					
City		State		Zip Code	
E-mail			Phone		
Truro PO Box			Dues	TNRTA Dues Enclosed:	\$35
Truro Zip Code			*Contributions	To TNRTA: \$	
Truro phone				To TEEA Scholarship Fund: \$	
			Total Enclosed:\$		

*All contributions designated for the Truro Citizenship Scholarship Fund will go in full from TNRTA to TEEA



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