



T R U R O
P A R T - T I M E
R E S I D E N T
T A X P A Y E R S ' A S S O C I A T I O N

Board of Directors:

Cathy Haynes, President
Anthony Garrett, Vice President
Regan McCarthy, Past President
Frank Korahais, Secretary
Peter Weiler, Treasurer//Clerk

Tom Bow
Ron Fichtner
Mark Hammer
Amy Helling

Andrew Smith
Caroline Mills Smith
Peter Sullivan

P.O. Box 324 · Truro, MA, 02666
tprta@tprta.org · www.tprta.org

Minutes of Twenty Third Annual Members' Meeting

Truro Meetinghouse | Truro, MA
Saturday, July 7, 2018

With a quorum of the Board, and more than 100 Members in attendance, the meeting was called to order at 10:10 AM

- 1. Guest Speakers: Cathy Haynes, President**, opened the meeting and introduced current board members. She also introduced Select Board member Maureen Burgess and new Police Chief Jamie Calise who were in the audience as well as guest speakers: John Marksbury, Chair of the Friends of the Truro Meetinghouse: and Kevin Kuechler, Chair of Truro's Water Resources Oversight Committee (WROC) which guides Truro's efforts to protect groundwater sources.

Mr. Marksbury welcomed attendees to the Meetinghouse, briefly described renovations and improvements made to the landmark Meetinghouse, thanks to funding from the Community Preservation Act and contributions from the Meetinghouse Friends and our organization.

Mr. Kuechler spoke of threats to the safety and future availability of ground water for the Cape and Truro in particular. WROC has focused on septic systems and storm water runoff. These are regarded as critical challenges to water purity. Kuechler cited aging and ineffective septic systems as the present focus of the group. As properties are sold or transferred property septic systems are reviewed. He added that owners should have septic systems cleaned and maintained periodically. He also pointed out the dangers of pesticides and the products used by mosquito control companies.

- 2. Minutes:** Minutes of the previous Annual Membership Meeting (2017) were approved.
- 3. Town Issues:** Cathy Haynes thanked former President Regan McCarthy for her years of leadership and assistance with transition of organizational leadership. She asked Regan to provide updates on Town issues and the RTE in particular, as these arose while she was President.
 - a. Residential Tax Exemption (RTE)** The RTE was implemented by the Town for the present fiscal year. This despite the overwhelming opposition by virtually all part-timers and some full-timers as well. It is likely to be approved for Fiscal Year 2020 as well—hopefully with no increase in the 20% burden borne by part-time residents. As requested by membership, TPRTA sought legal advice concerning the RTE. The Board understands that a legal challenge to the RTE could be made in good faith in Federal courts, it is not likely to prevail given federal deference to state regulation in this area. Notwithstanding some members' questions about

pursuing federal litigation, our Board understood that such a legal challenge would be very costly and time consuming. In addition, TPRTA could not be the plaintiff in any legal challenge since the organization is not a property owner in Truro; only one or more individual property owners could raise such a challenge. In a quick straw vote the room reaffirmed its opposition (88 to 5) to the RTE yet understood that the RTE as implemented appears to be “lawful “but awful.” The few supporting the RTE cited benefits they received from such regulations at their primary residences as well as possible benefits to some of local residents in need.

- b. **Continuing Concerns:** For the first (and hopefully only) time, line-item budget discussion at ATM was waived by the voters. This not only deprived part-timers of their only opportunity to comment on the final proposed budget, it can lead to rubber stamp passage of budgets by voters. She also noted that for the first time the right for part-timers to speak at ATM was challenged by the Town Moderator, who also cut time for part-timers to speak to half of that allowed to voters. She recommended we raise these as serious restrictions on part-timers’ input into tax, policy and budget matters. Part-time residents should consider registering to vote in Town. In addition there should be an effort to get part-time residents the vote on Town financial matters which some MA towns already allow. As a group we provide more that 80% of Town revenue from taxes and fees and an untold additional revenues to trades, small businesses and cultural/educational organizations in Truro. The right to have a say in how taxes part-time residents pay are used is the meaning of “taxation with representation.”

4. **Other business.** **Cathy Haynes** described the organization’s finances and membership as robust, adding a reminder that with the new fiscal year of the organization membership renewals will be solicited on a calendar basis.

- a. **PTRAC** - Truro has established an official Part Time Residents Advisory Committee, as a possible step to provide an official voice for part time residents.
- b. **Residential District House Size Limits** - Truro hopes to pass house size limitations town-wide similar to those passed for Truro properties within the Seashore.
- c. **Part-Timers’ Contributions to Truro:** TPRTA will work on “Get Out the Vote” efforts for part-time residents and programs to educate full time residents of the positive effects attributable to part-timers.

5. **Post-Meeting Celebration** - Cathy Haynes invited those in attendance to join outside following the meeting. TPRTA is providing the Meeting House with an Heirloom apple tree to be planted on the grounds in gratitude to Regan McCarthy for her years of service to TPRTA and Truro.

6. **Adjournment.** Business was concluded and the meeting was adjourned at 11:40AM

Respectfully submitted by: Frank Korahais, TPRTA Board Secretary