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Truro Select Board
Truro Town Hall
Truro, MA 02666

November 29, 2021 | via email

Re: Remote Access/Hybrid Meeting policy

Dear Mr. Weinstein and Select Board Members,

Mr. Tangeman was kind enough to inform us that the Select Board will be discussing the Town position on continuation of remote access and hybrid meeting policy at its regular meeting of December 7, 2021.

We believe remote access has been vital to continuing sound Town operations in an open and transparent manner during the pandemic, and we thank the SB for all it has done to make this possible.

The community also learned that remote access is now a viable and vital tool for public participation in Town matters; during the transition and post-pandemic period it enables many who cannot or should not attend public physical meetings to participate in Town governance. This includes part-timers, seniors, the disabled, working families and others who find physical access to public meetings risky, difficult or impossible.

At the same time, we recognize the value of actual physical presence at public meetings for those who can do this without risk or concern.

We urge the Select Board to permanently continue remote access to all meetings of public Boards, Committees and Town appointed task groups and to institute hybrid meetings when feasible for the most important decision-making committees – at a minimum, the key governance and regulatory bodies such as the SB, Board of Health, Finance & Joint Budget, Planning Board, ZBA, Conservation Commission, Local Comprehensive Plan, Charter Review, All Town Meeting and Special Town Meetings, and others whose deliberations have force and effect.

We also urge the SB to inform our State elected officials of the Town's desire to do this so that MA legislation will permit Truro to take these actions lawfully. We understand that without such extension, remote access provisions will expire on April 1, 2022.

The benefit to the entire Truro community to continuing remote access permanently and to instituting hybrid meetings as soon as safe to do so is enormous and self-evident.

Thank you for your consideration.

Anthony Garrett, President