

**Meeting Minutes for the Ad Hoc Building Committee (AHBC)  
Remote Meeting February 5, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 4:32pm by Co-Chair Michael Cohen.

A quorum of committee members was present:

Co-Chairs Michael Cohen and Bob Higgins-Steele; Members Anthony Garrett, Leif Hamnquist, Anastasia Song. Alternate Bob Panessiti was also present.

Mr. Paul Millett from Environmental Partners ("EP" or "OPM") and Mr. Jeff Alberti from Westin and Sampson ("W&S") were present to address committee questions.

**Agenda Item #1: Notetaker & Administrative**

Pursuant to previous agreed-upon rotation schedule, it was confirmed that Anastasia Song would take minutes of this meeting.

**Agenda Item #2: Co-Chairs Comment**

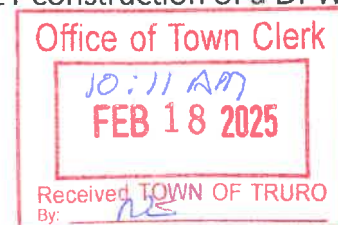
Co-Chair Bob Higgins-Steele opened by reading sections of the Massachusetts Open Meetings Law vis-à-vis Public Comment, in particular clarifying the protocols surrounding public comment and the authority of committee Chairs to limit or restrict public comment. He also requested today's meeting stay focused on shaping recommendations to the Select Board regarding a new DPW facility on Town Hall Hill. He indicated that public comment would be limited to 3 minutes per speaker. He further addressed a perceived concern around inaccurate information being circulated, and suggested people consult the taped meeting sessions for accurate accounts of discussions that have ensued on the DPW facility design.

Co-Chair Cohen said he had no comment at this point of the meeting and would share comments under Agenda Item #5.

**Agenda Item #3: Public Comment**

Mr. Cohen recognized Mr. Tim Hickey, homeowner and registered voter in Truro.

Mr. Hickey expressed concerns regarding the direction the present Truro DPW facility project was taking. He cited statistics for the 2021 construction of a DPW



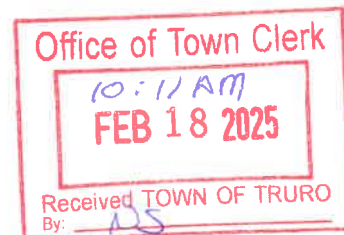


facility in Middleboro, MA – a 31,000 sq ft facility costing \$13.1 million, housing 36 vehicles, and 28 full-time employees. Town with population of 24,500. Mr. Hickey extrapolated cost estimates to account for inflation, pandemic and other factors and concluded that the facility being contemplated for Truro was too expensive and over-scaled for a town the size of Truro. He requested that his comments be formally reflected in the meeting record, which Mr. Cohen agreed to do.

Dennis O'Brien, Truro voter: Expressed concern about perceived absence of documented requirements for a proposed DPW facility. He felt it unwise for AHBC to vote at this meeting on a Campus vs Monolith design; he suggested this is putting cart before the horse. Mr. O'Brien indicated the AHBC should finalize requirements before attempting to advance design. Mr. O'Brien stated that the AHBC should attempt to reach consensus or risk a majority of voters electing to put entire DPW facility process on hold. He commented that the Truro voters "fed up" with what has been a "contorted DPW process" and are losing patience.

Laurie Lee: Referenced the letter she had sent to the AHBC last week. She stated that insufficient analysis has been done regarding the cost of continuing DPW operations during construction. Ms. Lee further noted that certain plans had incorporated the concept of having a DPW facility also accommodate other Town functions; she stated such synergistic aspects should be broken out and evaluated separately. Ms. Lee noted that certain of the W&S designs are showing ~ 24,000 sq ft, greater than the ~20,100 sq ft she believed was cited at the ATM. She suggested that W&S show alternative designs at the lower square footage to bring down price tag.

Mike Forgione, town resident: Expressed concern that previous AHBC meeting discussions addressing potential tax burden of a DPW project had been "oversimplified". Mr. Forgione cited Massachusetts tax statistics, noting "Truro is no longer a tax-friendly town". He expressed concern about the prospect of Truro total Debt Service crossing a prudency 10% threshold; and further that the current list of potential Truro capital projects – including Beach Point wastewater; Walsh Property; Truro Motor Inn; Pond Village Wastewater; and PFOS mitigation at Town Hall Hill among others – already have potential to heavily burden the Truro's debt structure, even before considering the additional debt burden of a new DPW facility. Mr. Forgione suggested the town needed to conduct a comprehensive 5-10 year capital plan.





Mr. Cohen cautioned Mr. Forgione regarding the 3-minute time limit for public comment raised by Mr. Higgins-Steele at the opening of the meeting. Mr. Forgione concluded his remarks requesting his written comments be included in the official minutes, which the Chairs agreed to.

Mr. Panessiti took issue with implication that he [being the committee member he believed Mr. Forgione referred to in his comments] was over-simplifying the financial discussion surrounding the DPW project. Mr. Panessiti pointed to work conducted by the Truro Finance Committee, Budget Task Force, and the Select Board addressing capital improvement plans and capital forecasts for the town. He further noted that the town had adopted a set of financial prudence policies around the levels of Truro debt including ratio of debt relative to the town budget.

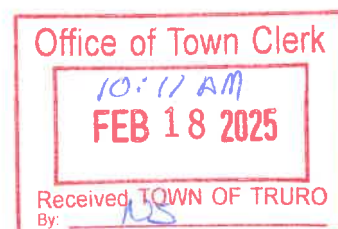
Regan McCarthy: Stated that the AHBC vote slated for this meeting was not a vote on design but rather a vote on whether the Truro community could trust the judgement of the AHBC if it "rushes forward" with incomplete designs. Ms. McCarthy suggested the AHBC credibility was at stake. She commented that the Select Board had expressly cautioned that AHBC to have the "courage" to raise legitimate concerns around the process and not rush the committee deliberation process.

#### **Agenda Item #4: DPW Staff/Member Update by DPW Member Jarrod Cabral**

Mr. Jarrod Cabral: Expressed his view that the AHBC should vote on a single specific schematic design this evening in order to advance the process. He had received questions from the AHBC over the previous week which he delegated to staff, W&S, and the OPM. He then turned floor to Mr. Paul Millett of EP.

Paul Millett: He acknowledged receipt of four proposals prepared by W&S and indicated he had sent them to EP's cost estimators for evaluation, which would require time to complete. Pending his estimators' review, Mr. Millett nonetheless expressed the view that the facility price tag would come in within the range of \$26-\$32 million estimates he had previously provided for a ~ 21,000 sq ft building. Mr. Millett indicated he did not have a detailed comparison of the four options but reiterated his view of the price range.

Mr. Millett commented there were several questions from the AHBC regarding the U.S. imposing import trade tariffs and also around projections of construction costs.





He noted clear pricing uncertainty around potential tariffs being threatened for Canada, Mexico, and China. Mr. Millett discussed the cost structure of a project he had previously worked on – the Yarmouth DPW Project. He noted that the materials component comprised 45-47% of the project. Assuming 80% of those materials were imported, and a 25% tariff imposed, this implies a 9.4% increase in total project cost.

In terms of broader inflation trends, Mr. Millett commented that his firms' estimators are indicating prices starting to level off; and expect cost inflation this year in the 3-4% range.

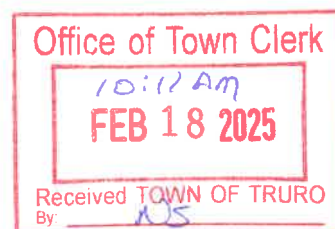
Mr. Millett explained that a typical job comprised 3 phases: Schematic Design, Design Development, then Construction Documents. Given current state of design, he is unable to accurately put a price tag on project – suggested AHBC would need to select a specific design to advance to state full Schematic Design Drawings whereupon costing could be accurately undertaken. Typically, a designer undertakes an estimate, then the OPM cross checks the figures in a process referred to as "estimate reconciliation". Mr. Millett indicated he sympathized with the AHBC's desire for more detailed pricing information, but not that would not possible at current stage of design.

Mr. Cohen asked to reiterate point – i.e., that Mr. Millett was suggesting that the committee needed to select a specific design to advance, and Mr. Millett confirmed.

Mr. Anthony Garrett probed the question of whether two schematic designs could be advanced in parallel, and how much that would cost. Given there are two 'divergent' designs on the table now, there may be cost savings that could be uncovered through the exploration of both options.

Mr. Millett: The ball park for advancing a schematic design would be in the range of \$250,000 - \$350,000. Doing two designs would probably not be double the cost due to cost synergies. This could be achieved in a 3 month period assuming W&S has the "horsepower" to undertake the work.

Mr. Jeff Alberti: To undertake two designs in parallel, he would assign two separate teams to work on this, and WS currently has the staffing resources to undertake this effort.





Mr. Panessiti: His recollection was that the committee had gone through a needs assessment, and WS was hired 5 or 6 years ago to do that and issued a "wish list" at 30,000 square feet. Mr. Panessiti asked the engineers to confirm his understanding.

Mr. Millett: The DPW facility needs to house people and equipment. Over the past few months he has reviewed with WS and Mr. Anthony Garrett. Some variation of opinions between want and need with respect to equipment storage inside vs outside. All people and equipment were accounted for.

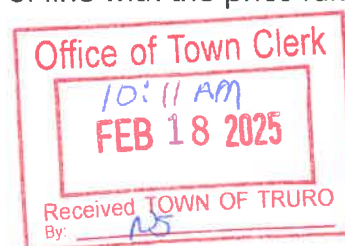
Mr. Cabral: Reminded committee that request for funding was based on advancing single design.

Ms. Anastasia Song: Commented that she felt pressured at the previous AHBC meeting by being presented engineering numbers right in advance of being expected to vote on same. Reiterated concerns about cost, price inflation, and tariffs. Thanked Mr. Millett for quantification of potential tariff impacts. Given his assessment, it seemed to her that realistic project cost range could be more in the \$30-\$40 million range even before financing contingency. Expressed concern about not having seen sufficient financial analysis of a complex project that's only at very early schematic level of design. Given the existence of at least two viable options (Campus and Monolith) Ms. Song expressed view that AHBC has responsibility to vet both more fully. She requested that vote be deferred pending more extensive analysis of options.

Mr. Cabral asked the engineers if there were further questions they might answer.

Mr. Alberti discussed the PFOS cap issue; relocation of staff under potential Monolith construction phasing; comprehensive needs analysis having been discussed with DPW staff; the pros and cons and costs of phased approach; size of administrative work area; modular construction; aspects of square footage costs; aesthetic massing of buildings; and so forth.

Mr. Alberti addressed comments made by Mr. Hickey in Public Comment regarding the Middleboro DPW facility - a project with which Mr. Alberti was involved. Mr. Alberti confirmed certain of the statistics cited by Mr. Hickey, but added that the full project cost (in 2019) of the facility was \$15.1 million. He felt that if one escalated the 2019 costs for the various factors (including pandemic, energy code, outer cape etc) that the Middleboro project costs were not out of line with the price ranges WS is citing for the current Truro plan.





Mr. Garrett asked Mr. Alberti to confirm that the program space square footage being discussed for Truro is currently the 20,150 sq ft plus canopy for a total of approximately 24,000 sq ft facility. Mr. Alberti confirmed this.

Mr. Garrett stated he disagreed with Mr. Alberti regarding comparability of civil site costs as between Campus and Single building plan, e.g., a single building would require fill and grading. Mr. Alberti countered that multiple buildings may require a greater paved area and more complicated stormwater systems; and hence carrying similar civil construction costs for both was reasonable. He added that advancing the design work would more accurately flesh out these details.

Mr. Alberti commented that he would be working with AHBC through schematic design and take input and comment from committee, and that design would be shaped through this process.

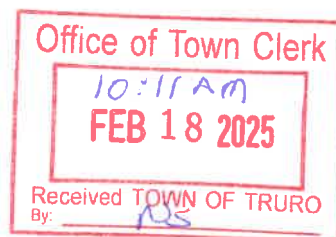
Mr. Panessiti: Stated the AHBC should defer to professionals who have been hired to analyze this project and not overreach committee scope. He underscored the need to move forward. Mr. Panessiti further commented that consideration needs to be given to synergies and related cost savings that might be obtained by dovetailing functions of a new DPW facility with other town activities (e.g., larger town auditorium meeting space). The new DPW facility could be a multi-purpose facility.

Ms. Song: Quoted Mr. Millett's comments earlier in the meeting where he noted he could use a few additional weeks to more thoroughly evaluate the WS options presented. She noted the town has retained EP as Owners Engineers; the AHBC accordingly should utilize EP and allow EP a few more weeks to provide an independent assessment of the WS proposals.

Mr. Cohen asked that the committee move forward to Item #5.

### **Agenda Item #5: Discussion and Vote on Campus Plan or a Consolidated Building**

Mr. Higgins-Steel opened with comments:



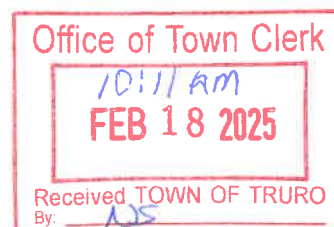


- Stated he initially preferred a Campus Plan at another location, but heard the voters loud and clear that they wanted a new DPW to be located on Town Hall Hill.
- Now is the time to decide a direction - Campus Plan or Single Building.
- In terms of potential reuse/recycling of existing structures at Town Hall Hill, Mr. Higgins-Steele doesn't see any purpose or advantage to retaining the Vehicle maintenance building. If a campus plan were to be selected, the program should scrape the entire site and configure the area from scratch in way that makes the most sense
- He reiterated the importance of DPW staff comments and concerns; and confirmed the minimum required space at 20,150 sq ft.
- He concluded that in summary, a Campus plan does not work for him.

Mr. Leif Hamnquist: the Committee is where it needs to be. It took a lot of time, but necessary steps have been undertaken. Mr. Hamnquist reiterated he had served on the Provincetown Police Building committee, and the Truro process has moved more expeditiously than that project. The current process, when advanced, would still allow for significant and meaningful AHBC input, identification of cost efficiencies, and design modifications. He stated the DPW Study Group efforts should be discounted as having been designed without a program; that effort should be entirely put aside. The current program requirements are a minimum 20,150 sq feet facility, and WS are clear experts in designing and building these types of facilities. Mr. Hamnquist indicated he is comfortable that a single building facility meets the requirements of the program and needs of the DPW staff, and is the better way to go. Her made an appeal to put political considerations aside.

Mr. Higgins-Steele asked Mr. Hamnquist to further elaborate on his work and experience over ten years on the Provincetown Police Building Project. Committee discussion ensued including comments by Mr. Millett who served for some period of time as project manager on the Provincetown Police Building Project. Points were made to the effect that the long delay in project timeline added significant overall cost to that project.

Mr. Hamnquist further commented that until contractor bids are opened, the actual price to the town would not be known. He noted that Truro is an unusual market and not comparable to (for example) Western Massachusetts or other regions. Cape Cod is "islanded", and resources such as labor are more constrained.





Mr. Garrett noted that in his current experience, contractors' project bids are far more competitive than even three years ago. Mr. Hamnquist concurred he is seeing this in the marketplace too. Mr. Garrett added that to the extent possible, pre-fabrication of structures should be done off-Cape, then transported to site as the most cost-effective route.

Mr. Garrett commented that a Campus Style plan offers more flexibility in terms of design. He is uncomfortable locking into a single structure plan.

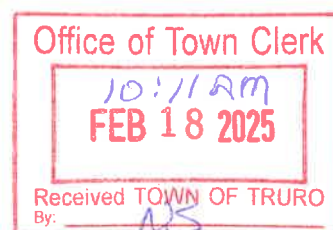
Mr. Cohen read into the record his prepared written summation. He stated:

- A \$20 million facility price tag is unrealistic
- The OPM provided a facility cost range of \$26 to \$31 million at a December 2024 Select Board meeting
- The OPM is the quarterback hired by the town.
- The process cannot use a phased approach because the "math is flawed".
- Any Further delay is only postponing the inevitable.
- The days of cheap financing over. There is no point continuing to discuss a missed window of opportunity.
- Mr. Cohen cited numerous statistics regarding the number of hours that have been spent by the AHBC and staff discussing this project.
- Concluded by stating that he supported WS Option #1 - Consolidated Building as his preferred option.

Mr. Garrett - remains concerned that the AHBC cannot not work in a pricing vacuum; the committee runs risk that if price tag too is too high, the town voters will once again reject the proposal.

Mr. Higgins-Steele commented that he too is concerned about price tag, but \$20 million completely unrealistic, if that is expectation than no point for an AHBC or DPW project at all.

Mr. Garrett noted that the DPW Study Group in 2023 determined / demonstrated that Town Hall Hill was a viable site, and he is gratified that this is the site being evaluated. He concurred that committee should be moving forward in Schematic Design. He pledged ongoing commitment to support committee work whichever path was selected.





Mr. Higgins-Steele expressed gratitude to Mr. Garrett for the work and efforts Mr. Garrett has contributed over several years in advancing the DPW project work. He then requested comment from Ms. Song.

Ms. Song: Expressed admiration for the amount of pro-bono work the AHBC has undertaken over several years. She stated that at the end of the day the voters will speak. Whichever path is selected to proceed, she expressed hope that the DPW staff and town will arrive at a good and appropriate facility.

Mr. Higgin-Steele requested a motion.

Discussion ensued regarding wording. Mr. Cohen favored wording expressly "abandoning" any campus style plan. Mr. Hamnquist and Mr. Higgins-Steele didn't favor using the word "abandon". Ms. Song requested that any motion permit each committee member to go on record expressly stating their preferred option.

**Mr. Cohen subsequently proposed a revised motion:**

**I'd like to make a motion to approve the Westin and Sampson Option #1 Consolidated Plan.**

The motion was seconded by Mr. Hamnquist.

No further discussion ensued.

Mr. Higgins-Steele called for a roll-call vote:

Ms. Song: No

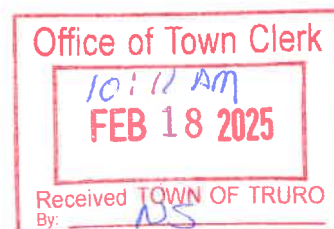
Mr. Garrett: No

Mr. Higgins-Steele: Yes

Mr. Cohen: Aye.

Mr. Hamnquist: Aye

The motion was carried by a vote of 3:2.





Brief discussion ensued regarding the AHBC meeting scheduled for the next day, Thursday February 6, 2025.

Mr. Cohen took an opportunity to express thanks to the AHBC committee members and others including the public who have offered comment throughout the process.

Mr. Garrett queried the purpose of the February 6 meeting, and Mr. Higgins-Steele and Mr. Hamnquist commented that progress could now be made on refining and advancing design with WS on a single project proposal. Mr. Garrett requested that the Feb 6 meeting focus on laying a specific timetable for deliverables expected of the AHBC going forward from here.

### **Agenda Items #6: Adjourn**

Mr. Higgins-Steele called for a motion to adjourn which was seconded and unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anastasia Song



2/17/2025

### **PUBLIC COMMENT READ INTO THE RECORD**

TO: The Town of Truro Ad Hoc Building Committee

Public Comment - February 5, 2025 by Tim Hickey

Dear Committee,

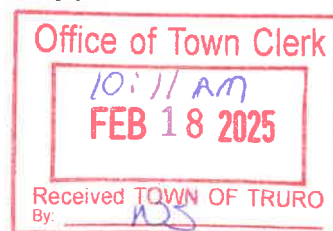
My name is Tim Hickey and I am a home owner and registered voter here in Truro, MA.

I have serious concerns about the direction, that some in our town are trying to force upon us regarding the new DPW building and it's proposals and cost projections.

I took it upon myself to do some research on the subject.

I discovered that the town of Middleborough, Massachusetts recently completed their brand-new DPW facility in 2021.

I visited and spoke with a couple of workers there and they provided me with some information.





- 1.) The total cost was 13.1M dollars.
- 2.) The size is approximately 31,000 sq feet
- 3.) It houses over thirty-six vehicles inside and has many more parking spaces outside.
- 4.) There are approximately twenty-eight full time employees inside the facility with beautiful offices, meeting rooms and a large welcome/payments desk.
- 5.) The town is over 72 sq miles and has an approximate population of 24,500 year round residents.
- 6.) The trash and recycle vehicles collect Monday through Friday on a "A" & "B" alternate week - schedule with over 340 roads and streets servicing over 7000 households.

Please note that this facility also has enough equipment and vehicles to provide snow removal from all those roads and streets.

13.1 million dollars adjusted up for inflation in Massachusetts from 2021 to 2025 is approx. 15.3 million dollars

This adjustment does not account for the Covid Bubble or Truro's remote location here on the end of the Cape. So, for the purpose of discussion let's double the original cost to account for all that and we still only get 26.2 Million Dollars.

But, that projected cost of \$26.2M is for

A facility in a town with ten times the population as Truro.

A facility in a town three times larger than Truro.

A facility in a town which serves 7000 households

I must ask. Why so big and why so expensive? And why can't we keep the cost under \$9 million?

Thank You

**Tim Hickey**

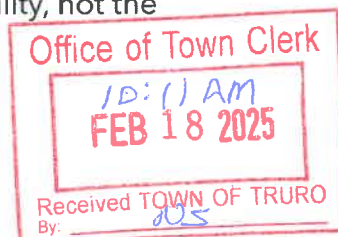
DPW Committee members,

The 11/1/24 letter I wrote to the Select Board regarding the shocking re-opening of DPW site selection, specifically aimed at 340 Route 6, appears to be of relevance to your 11/7 agenda, so I decided to forward it.

The main points in my letter include:

The Town Meeting vote to exclude the 340 Route 6 site for a new DPW Facility was definitive and based on several articles at the STM and again at the ATM.

It is disingenuous of ad hoc committee participants to claim that Town Meeting voters were confused or influenced by the DPW Study Group estimate of \$16M for a new Facility. It is also not true. The facts show that the \$2.8 million figure for design and engineering at Town Hall Hill was based on the Ad Hoc Committee's estimate of \$28 million for a new Facility, not the DPW Study Group's lower \$16 million estimate.





Additionally:

Task 1 and 3 of Appendix A of the OPM contract not only violate Town Meeting votes, but they will also cause additional delay and expense.

Task 1: While it may make sense for the OPM to review the 2019 W & S report as background information, spending 177 hours and \$48,545 including writing a report on the advantages and disadvantages of each site and associated costs serves no purpose. Town Meeting was clear: Build the new facility at Town Hall Hill and 340 Route 6 is specifically excluded for this use.

Task 3: Conducting an online survey to ask residents for site preference for the new DPW completely ignores the votes of over 600 residents at Town Meeting who with their vote already filled out that "survey". Again, a waste of time, energy and \$18,000.

Task 1 and Task 3 will require the Town to produce separate funding for a significant portion of the \$66,545 as the appropriation vote specifically forbids any funds to go towards any consideration of 340 Route 6. As you know Finance

any consideration of 340 Route 6. As you know Finance Committee already denied a \$10,000 request based on Town Meeting votes.

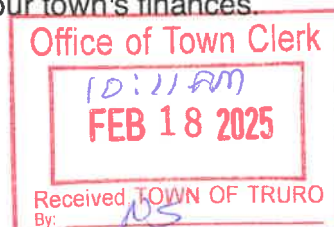
I ask you to join the Finance Committee and stand behind the votes of Town Meeting and the clear will of Truro residents and focus the OPM efforts on Town Hall Hill for the new DPW Facility. If any off-site needs are determined, so long as the predominant facility is at Town Hall Hill, Town Meeting made it clear that 340 Route 6 is off the table, entirely. I also ask that the OPM contract Task 1 and 3 be revised to reflect this.

Thank you - I appreciate your hard work and diligence.

**Laurie Lee; Truro voter**

Full Text of my Open Comments

The Ad Hoc Building Committee's proposed \$32 million DPW building raises serious financial concerns for Truro, demanding a broader perspective than a simple tax increase calculation. While a committee member suggested a \$32 million debt equates to a \$700 tax increase per year per household for 30 years, this oversimplification obscures the true impact on our town's finances.





Truro homeowners are already paying a substantial amount in property tax. According to Mass Division of Local Services the average single-family home in Massachusetts pays \$7,743 in real estate taxes. A Truro single-family home pays \$7,779 in real estate taxes. Truro is no longer a real-estate tax-friendly town.

The proposed \$32 million DPW building, with a projected 4.5% interest rate, would add \$1,968,827 to our annual debt service (Debt service is Interest and amount towards Debt). This would balloon Truro's total debt service from \$866,000 in FY25 to a staggering \$2,834,483 in FY26, increasing the debt service portion of our budget from 3.27% to 10%. This 10% threshold is significant, as many towns, including Barnstable County, Chatham, Provincetown, and Brewster, use 10% as a guideline for responsible financial management. Truro currently lacks such guidelines. Adhering to a 10% guideline would leave Truro with zero debt capacity for other critical projects.

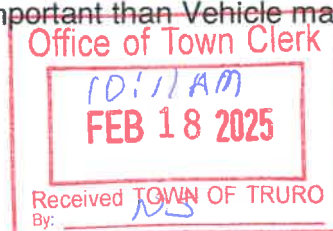
These other projects are not hypothetical. Within the next five years, Truro faces estimated costs exceeding \$50 million for essential needs, including:

- Beach Point Wastewater (\$25M-\$30M estimated at Board of Health meeting)
- Walsh Property Development (no estimate)
- Town Harbor Jetty Fix (no estimate)
- Longnook Beach Access (no estimate)
- Truro Motor Inn (\$400K to secure the building; development costs unknown)
- Pond Village Wastewater Infrastructure (\$1.2M – not sure of source)
- Water Tower and other water-related projects (no estimate)
- Town Hall and Library envelope improvements (\$1M)
- PFAS mitigation at Town Hall Hill (\$2M + \$1m for testing (\$200k/year for 5 years))
- PFAS testing and mitigation at 340/344 RT6 (\$150K testing; clean-up costs) no estimate
- Meeting our De-carbonization goal and state mandates (no estimate)

These projects, combined with the DPW building, could push Truro's total debt to \$80 million or more within five or so years, with annual debt service potentially reaching \$5 million per year. This level of debt will necessitate significant tax increases and/or cuts to essential town services. The town should be conducting comprehensive five-to-ten-year financial projections, rather than leaving this critical task to concerned citizens.

The Ad Hoc Building Committee must address several key questions:

- What specific cost savings and efficiency improvements are projected for the new DPW facility? Will these translate into actual budget cuts for the DPW to justify the cost?
- During the Dec 12th Select Board meeting, our OPM was commenting on the concern over the price-tag said " the program should again be revisited and reprioritized. Is Vehicle storage more important than Vehicle maintenance?





Do we want to have everything here? If you are trying to get this number down to whatever number is your target number, say it is \$25 million, you have to cut something here". Has the committee conducted this analysis? Are affordability considerations being adequately factored into decisions?

- Have you considered that the vehicle fleet will be changing to an electric-powered fleet over time, and how does that affect the plans?
- What is the committee's plan if Town Meeting rejects the current \$32 million proposal? How does this proposal differ from previous, unsuccessful proposals? The last failed proposal was asking \$28.3millions.

You must carefully consider the long-term financial implications of your decision for Truro's future.

The upcoming Town Meeting presents a crucial decision point. Approving the current DPW proposal risks severely limiting our ability to address other pressing needs, and will experience stiff opposition on that account, as evidenced by the FinCom not even wanting to spend an additional \$10,000 on the project. Rejecting the proposal allows us to pursue a phased approach, similar to Provincetown, prioritizing projects strategically.

**Michael Forgione**

