

A Call for an Affordable DPW Plan

To the Editor:

May 1, 2026

At the Pre-Town meeting on April 30th, we were struck by the extent to which the presentation on the DPW was incomplete and misleading, notwithstanding the full-court press by Town officials to try to convince voters that this proposal is the “best we can do.”

We KNOW it is not the best Truro can do. We know exactly how Truro voters can proceed to get a new first-class DPW that is cheaper, faster, and sized right for our Town, and good for our employees. It will not take long, but first we have to say NO to this Garage-Mahal.

For starters, we have to get the facts on project cost out to the public—the Town had to be pressed to make a frank disclosure at Pre-Town meeting: **\$29 Million**, as stated by Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Alex Lessin, is the total project cost; with financing costs, we estimate **over \$52 Million**.

For the past year, we have been part of an informal citizens’ effort—The Affordable DPW Project—led by a group of dedicated Truro taxpayers and voters with expertise in engineering, municipal construction, architecture, DPW design, public finance, data analysis, and communications who joined together to monitor and evaluate an ongoing evolution of new DPW plans and costs over the past year.

Our aim is simple: to make sure that taxpayers understand what Truro is **actually proposing** and know what other small MA towns constructing new DPWs recently have **actually paid**.

A key part of our work has been to dive deep into the costs, features, and functions of peer towns in MA who have developed or brought to town vote a DPW in 2025-26. Five peer Green Communities have recently designed—and four have built—modern, full-capacity DPWs that are larger than Truro’s, for up to 5-times larger populations, providing more services, with more DPW employees, vehicles, even road miles maintained. We are the smallest in every category, yet Truro’s proposed DPW costs remain the highest by far in total project and per square foot costs.

Inside Town government, the DPW plan has been a moving target for months, but just a few weeks ago, the Select Board finally landed on a size, and then got bids for that. With this information, we could then complete our analysis and present it to the public. Bottom line: Truro is paying 62% more on average than these other towns on an apples-to-apples basis.

The facts and numbers speak for themselves, and to help inform the public, we have prepared a five-minute video that lays it all out.

As we’ve said all along, Truro needs a new DPW. The sooner we get one, the better. Thanks to the great work of these five other towns, we can acquire and adapt any of these plans to suit Truro’s DPW site within several months at modest expense. But first, we have to vote **NO on Article 4**.

Truro voters could have a plan ready for approval at under \$20M by the fall. We are confident of this—and want voters to be also. Our [Affordable DPW video](#) will inform the public. We stand ready to answer questions.

Thank you,

Dennis O’Brien and Vince O’Connell
Truro