

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Freedom Board of Selectmen**  
**Date: 7-21-2025**  
**Approved 8-4-25**

**In attendance:** Laura Greeley, Lissa Widoff, Rene Ouellet, Beth Owen-Mishou Jim Waterman, Cindy Abbott, Brian Murphy, Meredith Coffin, Mary Ann Bennett, Joe Freeman, Heather Omand (via zoom), Steve Bennett, Ron Price, Kyle Price (via zoom), Kyla Windbloom

**Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 431 235 8395**  
**Passcode: TownMeet**

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Laura Greeley called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Announcements:
  - **Lissa Widoff moved to post the agenda for the Select Board Meetings on the Monday before the biweekly meetings, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
    - The select board members will try to update their template by Sunday at 9pm. It will be posted on the website and at the town office by 9:30am.
3. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report:
  - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to approve the minutes from 7-7-2025 as amended and place them on record, Rene Ouellet seconded the motion.**
4. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
  - Safety Works will come to the Freedom Fire Department: 9-23-2025 8am.
  - EMA meeting at 6:00pm in Swanville, Planning for the 10-28-2025 functional exercise being done.
  - Stop The Bleed: Free Training for Waldo County, 2-hour training, Certificate available.
  - Jim Waterman is working on a letter for Hardwood Lane. There are no house numbers. Limbs need to be cut up to 14 feet.
  - A water filter at the fire house has been installed and changed. It is for sentiment and iron.
  - Dale Rawley: training for operations of an EOC. Jim W. recommended that the select board go through this training. It was suggested that it be scheduled for September
  - Dam: awaiting a letter from the state. Recommendations will include:
    - Removing vegetation in front of the spillway.
    - Monitoring during high water.
    - Reinforcing the support of the wooden bridge.
    - Plugging the holes in the earthen dam.
  - \$3205.51 cost of repairs

- COOP plan is ready for signatures.
    - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to sign the COOP plan as it was updated at the last workshop, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
  - Freedom Field Day: 8-16-2025 Parade only.
  - Insurance Payments for the damage to the fire house, Laura Greeley was unsure and suggested we check with Cindy.
  - Rene Ouellet asked if we had a list of volunteers that could help in an emergency. It was suggested that this be worked on during a workshop. Laura Greeley asked if we might have liability restrictions. Jim Waterman said that there is a policy about this.
  - Lissa Widoff requested at the 7-28-2025 workshop they discuss the Community Resilience Program (CRP)
5. Treasurer's Report:
- **Lissa Widoff made a motion to pay the payroll warrant for the week of 7-14-2025 in the amount of \$9715.59 , Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
    - Why is the budget column not populated for payroll?
    - Laura Greeley will request that Contessa do this.
  - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to pay the A/P warrant for the week of 7-21-2025, in the amount of \$94,560.32 Renee Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
  - Camden National: \$267,240.10
  - Received Checks from:
    - State of Maine Rev Sharing: \$20,051.58
    - State of Maine Veteran Exempt: \$655
    - State of Maine Homestead: \$4,172.31
6. Public Works:
- 
7. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
- 
8. Citizens Issues:
- Joe Freeman: asked about the payment of unused PTO. It says it carries over to the next year but it does not say that it is paid out. The Select Board is going to research what the law is regarding the payout of PTO. Joe Freeman said that it is time earned. On the pay stub there is no spot for hours worked/ earned. Contessa will develop a system for this moving forward. There was discussion regarding part time vs full time employees. The board will research this and revise the policy. Rene asked for 2 weeks to look over the situation.
  - Brian Murphy: Hazard mitigation plan: Mitchel Road Bridge, Rollins Road, 2nd Mitchel Road Bridge, Beaver Ridge Road At a cost of \$362,500 This will be submitted to Dale Rolley.
    - Lissa Widoff asked about the plan and if she could get a copy.
  - Laura Greeley asked about the letter that Steve Bennett sent to the town. Steve stated that he partnered with the company that is taking over

when he retires. It is just an agreement that Chris Stiener will be the manager of the retirement accounts.

- Steve Bennett/ Ron Price/ Tim Biggs: Provided 4 copies of 4 documents regarding Public Works. (see attached)
  - There has been a public works department for a very long time. Steve Bennett reviewed the spreadsheet on a per mile cost for neighboring towns on the cost of winter roads. Lissa Widoff asked for clarification for what goes into the final figures. Steve Bennett reviewed what factors were included. Laura Greeley asked about how the purchase of new equipment is figured into this. Steve Bennett stated it is not.
    - Laura Greeley appreciates the numbers and the way it was presented.
  - Ron Price: stated that we are in a unique position and he feels that it is very beneficial to the town. He mentioned concerns about safety. Lissa Widoff clarified that the town engaged Safety Works and Public Works is addressing these issues. She spoke about occupancy costs and how that should be included in the figures presented. She summarized what she heard from them.
  - Tim Biggs mentioned cooperating with other towns with regard to public works and waste. Laura Greeley responded to this by discussing the pros and cons of each.
  - Rene Ouellet reported that he has heard some support from citizens regarding expanding public works.
  - Lissa Widoff mentioned safety, employees and the commitment to understanding the capital reserve account and a growing interest in interlocal agreements to meet town needs as factors to consider moving forward. Capital infrastructure could be addressed in future planning for the town.
  - Heather Omand: asked about the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Lissa Widoff is going to discuss this later in tonight's meeting.
  - Kyla Windbloom mentioned that our roads appear better maintained than other towns.
- Meredith Coffin asked if the turn around issue on Rollins Road has been resolved. Laura Greeley responded that they have come up with a plan while the property owner is out of state, with her permission. It has been suggested that a turnaround be placed across the street. It was suggested that there be ongoing conversations with the property owner. Laura Greeley asked Meredith Coffin to speak with the owner and find out when she will be back in town and reach out to the town.

#### 9. Review Correspondence:

- A letter arrived regarding being on the county budget committee. Laura's name was suggested as a member and this select board needs to vote.

- **Lissa Widoff moved that they vote for Laura Greeley for District 3 representative to the county budget committee, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**

#### 10. Town Officials Reports

- Code Enforcement: Cindy Abbott
  - Laura Greeley has not received any correspondence from Atty Kelly regarding the Young property.
- Assessors Agent: Jackie Robbins
  - There is an issue with Trio and Jackie has been working with Trio to correct this and it has affected a number of towns.
- Health Official: Patricia Ashland
- School Board Director: Eleanor Hess
  - There are 6 new school board members and Glen Couturier is the new chairperson of the school board.
  - Priorities:
    - Communications Committees
    - School Closure Committees
    - Long bus rides
    - Sub committees are now going to have 2 community members (non-voting) to offer input from their town and the district.
    - Budget Transparency
- General Assistance Officer: Rene Ouellet
  - 10 years' worth of papers are being organized.
- Plumbing Inspector: Cindy Abbott
- Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein
- Animal Control Officer:
  - Lissa Widoff mentioned that they interviewed 3 candidates. Johnna Hatt is their top candidate. All three candidates were excellent.
  - **Lissa Widoff made a motion that they offer the position to Johnna Hatt, Rene Ouellet seconded the motion and all approved.**
  - Lissa Widoff will reach out to her and offer her the position.
- Town Boards & Committee Reports:
  - Planning Board: Tyler Hadyniak
    - Have tabled the Mobile Home Park ordinance and are working on ADU's.
    - Rene Ouellet moved that the planning board use \$250 for legal research for ADU's and ordinance development, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.
    - Lissa Widoff suggested that KVCOG be consulted for ordinance development.
  - Recreational Committee: Chair yet to be determined
    - Parade: If anyone would like to help with the parade to contact Cindy. The parade would be on 8/16/2025.
  - Appeals Board: Michael Smith

- Laura Greeley heard back from Ben Feeney and they are waiting on Mike. The importance of timing was mentioned. Laura Greeley will send Ben Feeney another text tomorrow.
  - Rene Ouellet will reach out to Mike Smith.
  - Historical Society: Wilson Hess
  - Cemetery Committee: Steve Holmes
  - Budget Committee: Laura Greeley
  - CDAC Committee: Lissa Widoff
    - The state is doing site visits for towns that have received funding. 8/11/2025 is the date they will visit. Community Resilience Partnership from the State of Maine.
    - Re-enroll in the Community Resilience Program: 7/28/2025 workshop (about an hour) to discuss what needs to happen to make this happen.
  - Broadband Committee: Phil Bloomstein
  - Ad Hoc Policy Committee: Rene Ouellet
    - Rene Ouellet would like to discuss the policy book during the 7/28/2025 meeting. He suggested that they all review the document before they meet to expedite the discussion.
  - Budget Committee:
- 11. Old Business:
  - Law Suite: Emergency Order of Protection was filed and the judge dismissed that. Atty Kelly had to respond to orders which incurred additional costs. Laura Greeley reviewed what has occurred to date. The claim with MMA was approved and Ms. Donahue was appointed a defense attorney. A tort claim was coming our way, which means that all plaintiffs, if Heather is found guilty the town will be responsible to all plaintiffs. The town will also be provided an atty through the liability insurance. The legal fees from the second claim were \$3341 for lawyer fees. On 8/6/2025 the court will hear from the lawyers about various pending motions at the Court House at Waldo at 1pm. It will be a 45-minute hearing.
    - Kyle Price asked for clarification on the Beaver Ridge Road regarding public way versus a Public Easement. Laura Greeley read the court statement. Kyle Price reviewed a public easement definition.
  - Rene Ouellet will speak to Cindy Abbot about appointing the Deputy Clerk. Laura Greeley suggested that the Select Board review MMA's policy. They will also look at the job description for the Deputy Clerk.
  - E911 Addressing Ordinance Hearing will occur before the next select board meeting on 8/4/2025
  - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to set a date for the E911 addressing ordinance meeting at 6:00pm before the next Select Board Meeting, Rene Ouellet seconded and all improved.**
- 12. New Business:

- Rene Oullet will research PTO with MMA.
  - Tax Commitment
  - Funding for advertising for Public Works position
    - **Rene Ouellet moved for him to work with Beth to place an ad in the Midcoast Villager not to exceed \$100, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**
  - Boat Launch Policy: Rene Ouellet suggested that the changes be sent to him by the other members and he will create a second draft to be reviewed at the next meeting.
  - Comprehensive Plan Committee Charge: The purpose of the charge is to have information to provide to individuals interested in serving on this committee. Lissa Widoff read a description. The select board discussed revisions to the statement and will make it available to the citizens when it is completed and approved.
  - **Lissa Widoff made a motion that the description of the Comprehensive Plan Committee Charge be posted on the town website, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
    - Lissa Widoff will send an electronic copy to Beth.
  - Solid Waste Trash policy: Bill has had complaints about having to handle materials that could potentially be a biohazard. Lissa is reviewing the town's policy on trash.
  - Funeral Home: Rene received an email from a woman who is involved with Elder issues. If someone dies and does not have assets, does the town help with the burial through general assistance. Rene determined that it has been done one time in the past. Rene Ouellet will look into this further.
13. Date of Next Meeting: Monday August 4th , 2025 at 6:00 pm.
- Employee Handbook reviewed
  - (Lissa)
  - Job Descriptions: Lissa's will review the secretary description
14. Next Select Board Workshop, July 28, 2025
15. Adjourn: **Lissa Widoff made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 pm., Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**

### **Link to Zoom Recording:**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/A\\_rprDtf1yLsV3fcfCO8B0lfq6iuyiZD8VFXzv8R2F1-ijWhCj2xqBpHWNSelV2E.TmmCVuZNR\\_kwlg6x](https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/A_rprDtf1yLsV3fcfCO8B0lfq6iuyiZD8VFXzv8R2F1-ijWhCj2xqBpHWNSelV2E.TmmCVuZNR_kwlg6x)

Passcode: ?0N0HNQV