

Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 4-7-2025
Approved 4-22-2022

In attendance: Laura Greeley, Ryan Willette, Heather Donahue, Beth Owen-Mishou, Jim Waterman, Cindy Abbott, Brian Murphy, Kyle Price (via zoom), Nathan McCann, Kyla Windbloom (via zoom), Mary Ann Bennett, David Bennett, Atty William Kelly, Trudy Price, Travis Price, Ron Price, Lissa Widdof, Dylan Turner (via zoom), Erin French, Michael Dutton, Tyler Hadyniak, Clara Alvarez, Drew Fails, Meredith Coffin (via zoom), Kevin Malady, Prentice Grassi, Ben Feeney, Billie

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

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Laura Greeley called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to go into Executive session for legal consultation under 1 MRSA 405 (6) E at 6:10 pm. They came out of executive session at 6:50 pm no decisions were made at this time.
 - Laura Greeley made a motion to go into executive session for personnel matters 1 MRSA 405 (6) A at 6:53 and came out at 6:55. Prentice Grassi waived his right to meet privately with the Select Board Members.
 - There are 2 planning board positions that need to be reappointed.
 - Ryan Willette expressed his concern about the email that went around with regard to the solar array ordinance, where Prentice stated that he was on the planning board and Ryan felt that wording it this way was not appropriate.
 - Prentice Grassi responded to this and mentioned that he had been on the planning board for many years. He does not feel that that should affect his eligibility to be reappointed.
 - Laura Greeley stated that she likes Prentice and she feels that the decisions should not be based on who you like. She was concerned about a letter to the editor and about an email that was sent out to certain community members. She feels the email portrayed the Select Board in a misleading way. She read the email and the specific comments that she felt were misleading. She had spoken with Prentice and she asked him to correct the statement to reflect that the Select Board was doing what the majority of people in Freedom wanted.
 - Prentice Grassi responded that he would stand by all the language he used. He disagrees that the email was not factual. He feels the ordinance needs to be fixed. He feels his tenure on the planning board and his participation in town politics speaks for itself.

- Laura Greeley asked what would have happened if the Solar Ordinance had been voted down.
- Prentice Grassi said he feels it was a poor process and he does not feel it would have affected solar development in town. He stated that there is a process for applying for a permit. The latest draft of the planning boards policy, before the planning board took over, would have prevented the solar array on 137.
- Laura Greeley stated that there were issues with that policy.
- Prentice Grassi, stated that he does not feel that what he did should interfere with his reappointment.
- Tyler Hadyniak stated that he wants the people to decide and suggested that straw poll be taken to see if they want Prentice Grassi reelected.
- Prentice Grassi stated that he was concerned because comments were made to other planning board members about not reappointing Prentice.
- Laura Greeley stated that the Solar Array Ordinance was a huge issue for the citizens.
- Clara Alvarez stated that she felt that the Select Board took the policy away from the Planning Board.
- Lissa Widoff spoke on the process, the planning board creates a product and this goes to a town vote. She said that there are appeals processes built in. The committee should have the ability to do their work and then there is a vote. She said there is a concern about the select board taking back that power.
- Meredith Coffin: said that she read the survey results and in the comments were questions that were not addressed.
- Laura Greeley said she has been consistent with the majority of the people.
- Ron Price stated that whether you agree or disagree with the position Prentice Grassi took, he is an individual who has been active and helpful in the town for a long time. He feels like one mistake should not reflect his reappointment.
- Kevin Malady: Losing Prentice on the board would equal a significant loss, in the representation of farming and agriculture.
- Laura Greeley asked how they perceive themselves as a board. Do they see themselves as “getting the pulse of the citizens” when they make their decisions?
- Mary Ann Bennett stated that it is the majority of the people that Laura speaks with and that this may not be the opinion of the majority of the people.
- Heather Donahue was concerned that the planning board is not always prepared for the issues that have been coming up and have not done the research necessary to address the issues.
- Prentice Grassi asked about Laura Greeley’s comments about forgiving people for their actions. She responded.

- Ryan Willette asked to table the decision about Prentice's reappointment.
 - Michael Dutton stated that he has worked with Prentice Grassi as a planning board member and that he has been balanced in his work and impartial as well as having experience. He feels that information should be based on data. He asked about numbers, i.e. how many people responded to the surveys versus how many town residents there are.
 - Erin French feels that it is a very emotionally charged issue at the moment and she is not sure that it is the right environment to be making a decision. She supports Ryan's suggestion to wait. She trusts Prentice and feels that he has done good things for the town.
 - Tyler Hadyniak presented a letter to the board and asked that it be included in the minutes. (please see attached)
 - Nathan McCann said that it is the Select Board's prerogative to appoint individuals to boards. He feels that the Select Board is being flexible in the way they are making the decision about the Planning Board.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to reappoint Kevin Malady as a planning board member, Heather Donahue seconded the motion and all approved.
 - Prentice Grassi asked if he should attend the planning board meeting, the response was yes.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to go into executive session for 1 MRSA 405 (6) A for personnel matters at 8:55 pm, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved. They came out of executive session at 9:05. A decision was made.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to hire William Thomson of Freedom to be the new trash assistant, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
2. Announcements:
- Laura Greeley stated that the Select Board did not send out the letter to the Freedom Citizens regarding the recall.
3. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report:
- Heather Donahue made a motion to approve the minutes from 3-17-2025 with the stated amendments and place them on record, Ryan Willette seconded the motion and all approved.
 - Heather Donahue made a motion to enter the minutes from the Annual Town Meeting as amended, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
4. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
- Jim Waterman presented the signature sheet for the Emergency Action Plan for the Sandy Pond Dam.
 - Heather Donahue made a motion to sign the Sandy Pond Dam EAP, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to sign the emergency plan ordinance for the Town of Freedom, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.

- The Ed McDonald Safety grant is being applied for, for 3 sets of non-structural turn out gear.
 - The bureau of labor has been in the area doing inspections.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to appoint Cindy Abbott and the addressing agent, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
5. Public Works: Ryan Willette
- They are working on the summer materials.
 - They had to work on the Glidden Road, Albion and Unity were helpful with us using posted roads.
 - Collapsed culvert has been replaced.
 - The excavator and equipment trailer are being worked on.
 - A hole of the Mitchel Road was filled and they will look at the bridge.
 - Washout in the culvert on Ayer Ridge Road.
 - Trash truck broke down due to the power hose. Loren adapted some parts and fixed it.
 - The engine waste oil has been removed.
 - Loren and Ryan Willette attended a smart stream crossing course in Thorndike.
 - The culvert needs to be replaced by Gunner Woods' place on Goosepecker Ridge in Freedom.
 - MMA compliance issues have been mostly addressed.
 - Spring Clean Up: Week of May 5th for 2 weeks. Ryan Willette stated that last year's flyer was fine with the dates changed. They will modify the flyer to say that the last day is only metal and tires.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion that they set Spring Clean Up for the May 5-16th, 2025, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
6. Treasurer's Report:
- Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the payroll warrant for the week of 3-24-25 in the amount of \$7371.51, and the payroll warrant for 4-7-25 \$12,242.51, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the A/P warrant for the week of 4-7-25 in the amount of \$53219.36, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
 - \$884.17 rental payment for the Post Office was received.
 - State of Maine Revenue sharing \$6033.05
 - Camden National: \$511,013.71
7. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
- Cindy Abbott provided March reports.
 - Heather Donahue asked about whether we have heard about the people who have not responded. Cindy Abbott reached out to the post office and has not heard back yet.
 - She reviewed accounts unpaid.
 - Library Pass: she would like permission to pay that.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the library pass using the town credit card, in the amount of \$175 for the Botanical Gardens, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.

- June election is June 10th, absentee ballots need to be available by May 12th. First Select Board Meeting would be May 5th and that is when the warrant would need to be signed. All ballot questions would need to be submitted by May 5th.
 - Cindy will be on vacation the last week of April and will be returning by May 5th. Heather asked if anyone would be covering. Cindy stated that licensing could be done online or in another town. Hilltop Store has Freedom Trash stickers. If purchased there you have to use cash.
8. Citizens Issues:
- David Bennett presented the Select Board Members with photos of damage a 4 wheeler did to his property.
 - Travis Price presented information from the State of Maine regarding a lien put on his property due to the IRS issues the town incurred.
 - Laura Greeley said she will ask the Town Atty what our options are. She will also reach out to the IRS and the state.
 - Ron Price stated that this has been a long process. He is concerned that there has been a lien placed on Travis' property. He would like the lien extinguished immediately.
 - What was the result of the Pond water test by the state? Heather Donahue stated that we have not heard back from the State. It is assumed that all is good if they have not contacted us.
 - Nathan McCann: thought it was great how the Select Board handled individuals who were overstepping their roles during the meeting. He wondered if Freedom should have an ordinance regarding genetically modifying creatures.
9. Review Correspondence:
- Ryan Willette received a letter from TLK with a flyer of all their future events. The board appreciated this.
10. Town Officials Reports
- Code Enforcement: Cindy Abbott
 - Assessors Agent: Jackie Robbins
 - Health Official: Patricia Ashland
 - School Board Director: Eleanor Hess
 - General Assistance Officer: Ryan Willette
 - Plumbing Inspector: Cindy Abbott
 - Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein
 - Animal Control Officer: Meg Anderson
 - Town Boards & Committee Reports:
 - Planning Board: Tyler Hadyniak
 - Meeting tomorrow.
 - Recreational Committee: Chair yet to be determined.
 - April 19th at noon for the Easter Party for the community
 - Egg hunt
 - Activities
 - Bike raffle
 - A Cutest Baby Bonnet contest was suggested

- Ryan has 2 students who need community service hours.
Working on the front garden was suggested.
 - Appeals Board: Michael Smith
 - Historical Society: Wilson Hess
 - Cemetery Committee: Steve Holmes
 - Budget Committee: Laura Greeley
 - CDAC Committee: Lissa Widoff
 - Broadband Committee: Phil Bloomstein
 - Ad Hoc Policy Committee: Rene Ouellet
 - Budget Committee:
11. Old Business:
 12. New Business:
 - Ryan Willette made a motion that we send in our MMA property and casualty renewal information, Heather seconded and all approved.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion that we do a new pay sheet for the new employees, Heather Donahue seconded and all approved.
 - Street Light rotation, Heather Donahue has requested a second street light.
 - Ryan Willette asked about the clean up on the Greeley Road has not been cleaned up. It was supposed to be done last week and it has not been done. Laura Greeley asked what is going to be done. Cindy will firmly let him know that it needs to be done this week.
 13. Date of Next Meeting: Monday April 21, 2025 at 6:00 pm.
 14. Next Select Board Workshop Monday April 14, 2024 at 7:30 am
 15. Adjourn: Ryan Willette made a motion to adjourn at 9:40 pm.

Recording Information:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/86F_7IkA2g00AHV6Sw0NeFf_N2MMcCBPER3LvAQ2WhAwR_4FyclSC0-ARpmlMQQq.FL_LBkzWs6vxUVGT?startTime=1744063089000

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