

**A Public Hearing on a proposed Electric Transmission Facilities and Corridors Ordinance (ETFC)
will be held first and then proceed immediately to the Town Meeting
11-28-2023**

Select Board Members Present: Steve Bennett, Laura Greeley, Ryan Willette

Town Clerk: Cindy Abbott

Cindy Abbott initiated the meeting by explaining how to get a card to vote. She read the warrant in it's entirety. (see attached).

Article 1: Choose a moderator. Ryan Willette nominated Rene Ouellet, Meridith Coffin seconded and all approved.

Cindy Abbott then swore in Rene Ouellet in his role of moderator.

Rene Ouellet began the meeting: He reviewed the function of the moderator and his expectations for how the meeting would run.

Article 4: *To see if the voters of the Town of Freedom will vote to adopt and Electric Transmission Facilities and Corridors Ordinance (ETFC) for the Town of Freedom.*

Steve Bennett made a motion that we pass the motion for the electrical transmission Facilities and Corridors Ordinance, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.

Doug Vanhorn asked if this is what we are voting on up or down with no amendments. The response was that we are voting on it as written. It cannot be amended tonight but can be amended in the future if needed.

Tyler Hadyniak: He stated that he is favor of this ordinance and he reviewed the things that he likes about the ordinance. It incorporates our existing commercial development ordinance. The town would vote on waivers. Allows for other waivers at the planning boards discretion. He would like to see a bond for the decommissioning of transmission lines. He was not in favor of the process that occurred to get to where we are tonight. He feels that it was contrary to what the town Atty. suggested in terms of a slow and steady process. He stated that substantively it is good but the process of getting here was not.

Steve Bennett responded to Tyler's comments. The decommissioning standard is in the ordinance. In response to Tyler's other concerns, Steve stated that he is concerned about the power of the state. The state started this process two years ago and towns were not informed. He reviewed the history of the transmission lines with regard to the State of Maine.

Elaine Higgins: She feels that the ordinance as written is imperfect, but it gets something on the books. She is in favor of the lines being buried. If we pass this it will give us time to revise it if needed. She asked if anyone had done research on eminent domain. It is part of the 5th amendment. If they take your property, they are supposed to pay you fair market value. She is going to vote for this and then will work to make it better.

David Spencer: He does not agree about getting reimbursed for your land. If they cut across your property your property is devalued.

Ryan Willette: You will be paid a one-time easement. Property value is based on the market at that time. He agrees that the process of getting it passed was not perfect but it allows us to get an ordinance on the books.

Tyler Hadyniak: He has done exhaustive research on how this process works and would be willing to share that research.

Xxx : If push comes to shove the power of domain authority has the right to argue over fair market value.

Doug Vanhorn: We pay for all of these things to happen through our rate paying. If we are going to have alternative energy, we will have to have power lines. He is favor of underground lines. He feels we will be paying for this regardless. He thinks that the ordinances are good and he will vote for them. In the purpose it should have something about visual impact.

Heather Donahue: She appreciates the point made in terms of property values and personal freedoms. This is a large interstate company that is coming to Maine and trying to cut through people's property. She feels that we need to look forward to future generations and what do we want this to look like for future generations.

Steve Bennett: Massachusetts using 17 times as much electricity as Maine. There will be more transmission lines. The cost gets transferred to the rate payors. The person who attended the select board meeting last week felt that it was a good ordinance. He spoke with our state legislator and he said a moratorium is good but an ordinance is better. He reviewed where lines cannot be run.

Lissa Whitock: Asked about how the ordinance was derived and what the process was.

Steve Bennette: It originally came from Cara Tunk and it was used by Palermo and other area towns. It was pulled from an active discussion.

Meredith Coffin: Asked if this is a hearing and if it is legal if we take a vote. Based on the town's attorney's response and MMA it is a legal and binding process tonight. Under section 14, 11 she would like some clarification. She feels 11 and 12 are repetitive and did not know why both needed to be there. She felt 15 and 16 could be combined.

Rene Ouellet: asked if anyone wanted to clarify her questions.

Meredith Coffin: Section 10 stray voltage #2. There was redundancy regarding the application.

Steve Bennett: stated that it is a pre test/ post test to establish a baseline. She then asked why they would have to permit application again. She asked if the permit application was part of this. He stated that it was a very restrictive ordinance.

Ryan Willette: responded that this was the initial application and that it was the initial phase and that B was the final application process. The process she mentioned were two steps in the process.

Lissa Whitock: Section B 15/16 are redundant

Tyler Hadyniak: mentioned that 14 B is numbered incorrectly.

Laura Greeley stated that the document had been reviewed by Palermo's attorney and that it has been reviewed. She said that there had been no substantive changes.

Elaine Higgins: it is an imperfect document that needs editing. She feels that it should be passed tonight then by March we can modify and make corrections by the town meeting.

Laura Greeley: in the big picture we will have an ordinance on the books that will protect our people. As a board they had a sense of urgency on behalf of the citizens of Freedom. She appreciates that the planning board has increased their meetings to twice of weeks. The select board did this to support the residents. Amendments will be made and will be fixed.

Maryanne Bennett: sounds like the ordinance will pass. The planning board could go over this and have it ready by the town meeting for changes.

Ryan Willette: agreed with Maryanne that all of the small changes could be made but this ordinance needs to be in place.

Dave Bennett: the decommissioning bond needs to be written to it is stuck to the project.

Ryan Willette: stated that it should be similar to the solar decommissioning.

Chuck Hadyniak asked if we could move to a vote. Majority approved.

Article 4: passed

Motion to adjourn