

Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 4-10-2023
Approved 4/18/2023

In Attendance: Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Elaine Higgins, Jim Waterman, Beth Owen-Mishou, Bob Kanzler, Ben Feeney, Ron Littlefield, Barbara Littlefield, Raven Carlezon, Josh Sutor, Kirk Thomas, Clint Spaulding, Christine Spaulding, Joe Freeman, Tyler Hyndiniak (via Zoom), Nathan McCann, Cindy Abbott, Jacob Brugger, Alyssa Brugger, Jason Young, AnnMarie Adamson (via zoom), Meredith Coffin (via Zoom), Brandon Sutor, Jennifer Doyle, Tim Biggs

New Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 431 235 8359
Passcode: TownMeet

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Ron called the meeting to order at 6pm.
2. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Steve Bennett made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
3. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
 - o The air compressor is down and Ron Waterman is working with Ideal Electric to get a new electric starter.
 - o Mitchell hill fire this week
 - o Turner Ridge for assistance in Palermo
 - o No burning after 5pm and a permit is needed. Permits can be found on the town website as well.
4. Public Works Director Report: Travis Price
 - o Not present d/t illness
 - o Travis and Ryan were both drug tested this afternoon as part of a routine testing program.
5. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
 - o \$5,293.03 Payroll warrant, A/P warrant: \$5,045.14
 - o Check book is not balanced: there is a ticket in with Trio for Karen and Cindy on Friday
 - o The Camden Bank report was not in the general paperwork, they will continue to work on this.
 - o Grader registration came
 - o Office closed next Monday, for Patriots Day
 - o Cindy has tax lean training tomorrow
 - o Steve commented that he likes seeing the lines matching up with the warrant. There are still changes needed but it is looking much better.
 - o Kristy has New Clerk Training on Wednesday the 19th and Thursday the 20th. Cindy Abbott will cover.
 - o MMA dues and membership is over budget and needs clarification.
 - o Ryan made a motion to pay the \$5,293.03 Payroll warrant, A/P warrant: \$5,045.14, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.

- Kirk Thomas asked if citizens are allowed to look at the warrants. Ron Price suggested that he come to the town hall and do that on a separate day.
- 6. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
 - Cindy Abbot presented the Clerk's report:
 - Steve Bennett asked if the excise tax is less than it was in previous years.
 - Cindy Abbott provided detailed reports of:
 - Excise taxes
 - Tax received
 - Taxes: there are outstanding taxes due
 - a. Notices will be sent the second week of May
 - Pre payments for 2023
- 7. Citizen's Issues and Questions
 - Clint Spaulding: Albion's Road Commissioner came into his shop today asking about a grading in Freedom. He was wondering if we are planning to hire someone to come in. Ron said he is not aware of this.
 - He mentioned the renting of an excavator in addition to our own. This was done because we needed a grinder attachment that could not be attached to the one we have. Steve Bennett stated that we rented an excavator with a grinder because we could not find the one to fit ours.
 - Bob Kenzler asked if there was a security system at Public Works. Ron Price and Steve Bennett stated yes there is and that and everything is inventoried and insured.
 - Kirk Thomas stated that there was a letter sent out by Elaine Higgins and that the taxes would need to go up in part due to the need to maintain qualified employees in the town. He requested salary information for all the town employees. Ron Price and Steve Bennett reported that the salaries were listed in the town report and that it was available. Ron Price stated that we use state wages as a guide. Kirk Thomas stated that it is over the state wages in Knox.
 - Jason Young stated that he is working on his demolition report. Ron Price encouraged him to speak with the code enforcement officer.
- 8. Review Correspondence
- 9. Town Officials Reports
 - Code Enforcement Officer: Ron Smith spoke with Jackie Robbins and she is working on the current issues. She is addressing the issue on High Street.
 - Property Tax exemption application was received.
 - The select board members are reviewing the tax maps.
 - Health Official
 - School Board Director
 - General Assistance Officer
 - Plumbing Inspector
 - Solid Waste Director:

- A date for Spring Clean-up needs to be determined. (not the first week of May) The second week of May was better for those involved.
 - Animal Control Officer
- 10. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
 - Planning Board: Meeting tomorrow to discuss some clarification questions around solar arrays. 7pm in person at the town office.
 - Recreational Committee:
 - Meeting coming up soon
 - Good turn out Saturday, about 30 children
 - Pictures of kids with the bunny will be posted on Facebook as well as the raffle drawings.
 - Appeals Board
 - Charter Committee:
 - Tyler Hydiniak spoke and said that the Charter Committee would like the time frame changed so they can extend the deadline. They would like their deadline extended to March 11, 2024.
 - Steve Bennett stated that there are 9 town members who have been working diligently working on the document for the last year. This would create a constitution for the town. He feels it is a good thing for the town to have. This will also open up our opportunity to seek USDA grant money. This would allow us to apply for many things without it having to involve tax dollars.
 - Ben Feeney asked if there was a downside to having a town charter/constitution. Steve Bennett stated that there were none that he was aware of. He also stated that there can be amendments to it if it is needed.
 - Bob Kenzler asked if we have been comparing it to towns our size. Steve Bennett said yes.
 - Steve Bennett made a motion that under 30-A MRSA 2103 (5)(E) for the select board to extend the deadline for the Charter Commission to make publicly available a preliminary Town Charter, with such deadline to be no later than March 11, 2024, seconded by Ryan Willette and all approved.
 - Meredith thanked Ryan Willette for coming to the meeting and appreciated that he was familiar with the proposed charter.
 - Historical Society
 - Cemetery Committee
 - Budget Committee: will meet when the final audit is done.
 - CDAC Committee: Alyssa Windoff sent information about funding that is available regarding community resilience.
- 11. Old Business
 - Water tests are being completed.
- 12. New Business

- Monday April 17th at 8 am for Select Board workshop for Tax Maps
- Peace Ridge request for a tax abatement was received. The select board will review the request. They have 640 acres. It was refused last year due to the land not being used for the purposes stated. There is a barn on the property now. This property is off the Barnes Road. Steve Bennett stated that any non-profit should be removing a burden from the town. This organization has multiple operations around the state. They take in all kinds of animals and house them until they pass.

13. Date of Next Meeting: 4-18-2023 Tuesday, due to the holiday on Monday

14. Adjourn: Ron adjourned the meeting at 7pm.