

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Freedom Board of Selectmen**  
**Date: 1-16-2024**

**In attendance:** Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Laura Greeley, Cindy Abbott (via phone), Beth Owen-Mishou, Elaine Higgins (via zoom), Jim Waterman (via zoom) , Meredith Coffin (via zoom), Ann Marie Adamson (via zoom), Heather Donahue (via zoom)

***Approved 1-29-2024***

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

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Steve Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:50pm.
2. Announcements:
  - Next Monday January 22, 2024 the Select Board will not be meeting in the evening but will be meeting at 7:30 am for a workshop. The 29th will be the next full meeting in the evening.
3. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Ryan Willette made a motion that the minutes be accepted as amended and placed on file, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
4. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
  - 9am Interstate Fire will be here to look at all the fire extinguishers and put new tags on, throughout town. Ryan Willette will make sure someone will be at the Town Garage
  - Budget Meeting for the Fire Dept on Thursday.
  - Jim Waterman is meeting with Michael Dutton regarding his dam and writing a report for Tara Ayotte. The Lost Kitchen will be doing the Farmer's Market on Tuesdays starting in June
  - Bill Thompson has talked with the Tyrone's and he will be trapping the beavers.
  - Kyle Sheridan with MMA risk management will be coming to look at buildings and structural buildings from a safety perspective. Wednesday the 31st of January. Will meet Steve at the town hall at 9am.
5. Public Works Director Report:
  - Ryan Willette reported:
    - Ryan Willette asked for clarification regarding the number of hours worked per week. As long as 40 hours have been worked, they do not have to go down and work more during the day.
    - Laura Greeley mentioned that the Mitchell Road has been plowed very well.
6. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
  - Payroll Warrant = \$ 6,389.41 A/P Warrant = \$15,225.89

- Ending Checkbook balance \$208,995.80 March Cash Balance
  - Camden National = \$237,536.64
  - Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the Payroll Warrant = \$ 6,389.41 and the A/P Warrant = \$15,225.89, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
7. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
- Nominations papers for clerk, tax collector and excise tax collector were submitted. Cynthia Abbott has turned in her papers for all 3 positions as of 1-11-2024
  - Nomination papers turned in:
    - Select Board Member: Elaine Higgins and Heather Donahue.
    - Clerk, Tax Collector and Excise Tax Collector- Cynthia Abbott
  - Mailing for Election Information next week, does the select board have anything to add to this.
  - Steve Bennett asked Cindy to look for any unpaid 2023 taxes. \$131,000 is the lowest amount of unpaid taxes since 2005. 9.6% unpaid taxes. \$40,000 still for 2022.
8. Citizen's Issues and Questions
- Elaine Higgins: She and Heather Donahue are considering a debate on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 6pm in the annex. Open to the public
    - Steve Bennett made a motion that a Debate night be scheduled for 6pm on February 21 in the town annex, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
9. Review Correspondence
- Lee Jescavice: sent a letter regarding recycling.
  - Brianna Rosen has had difficulty reaching Cindy Abbott regarding payroll.
  - Carmon Bombecci, structural engineer, bill for reviewing the proposal for the consent agreement, \$465.
    - Ryan Willette made a motion to put the Gartley and Dorsky Engineering bill for \$465 on the warrant for next week, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
10. Town Officials Reports
- Code Enforcement: Jackie Robbins
  - Assessors Agent: Jackie Robbins
  - Health Official: Patricia Ashland
  - School Board Director: Elenore Hess
  - General Assistance Officer: Ryan Willette
  - Plumbing Inspector: Jackie Robbins
  - Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein
  - Animal Control Officer: Peter Nerber
11. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
- Planning Board: 1-23-2024 6-8pm
    - June of 2022 the planning board was working on the solar ordinance.
    - Steve Bennett feels that there should be more concern about open usable farmland.

- Laura Greeley expressed that she felt it had been a more collaborative process. There are many allowances versus restrictions.
- Recreational Committee: Alyssa Brugger
  - Fishing Derby:
- Appeals Board: Michael Smith
  - Having a meeting on January 22, at 6 pm at the town voting hall.
- Historical Society: Wilson Hess
  - Freedom Follies
  - Winterfest, February 17th tentative date
- Cemetery Committee: Steve Holmes
- Budget Committee:
- CDAC Committee: Lex Bennett
  - Are interviewing a candidate for the RFP.
- Broadband Committee: Phil Bloomstein
  - Correspondence regarding an 8 x 8 building by the well house. Steve Bennett sent the information to Direct Communications.
- Ad Hoc Policy Committee: Rene Ouellet
- Ad Hoc Education Committee: Laura Greeley
- High Impact Transmission Line Ad Hoc Committee: Heather Donahue:
  - LS power, PUC revoked their deal. Bill 1963 to reconfigure the Aroostic gateway project is on the state agenda.

## 12. Old Business

- Pete Coughlin and DOT grant application, Ryan Willette and Laura Greeley split up the items on the application and anticipate finishing it.
- Ron Valles is all set to start work on the Post Office. Cost is estimated at \$500-\$700. The back driveway needs gravel by the end of the spring.
  - Elaine Higgins asked about an on-demand generator for the post office. Steve Bennett will put it on the agenda for the budget committee
- Mike Thibodeau will moderate the town meeting
- Steve Bennett picked up an app for use of the High School for the town meeting.

## 13. New Business:

- Steve Bennett made a motion that they sign a warrant for a hearing, January 29th at 6pm, in the election hall on the changes that are being proposed for the transmission ordinance, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion to go into executive session at 7:00pm for 1 MRSA 405 (6) E for Legal Consultation, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved. They came out of executive session at 7:40pm and no decisions were made.
- Ryan Willette made a motion to have Cindy Abbott set up the BMV online registration through the BMV website, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.

- Ryan Willette made a motion for Cindy Abbot to do a door-to-door mailing for multiple purposes, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
14. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 29, 2024. 6pm
  15. Select Board Workshop 7:30 am on 1-22-2024
  16. Adjourn: Steve Bennett made a motion to adjourn, at 7:40 pm, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.