

Town Hearing

9-30-2023

Cindy Abbott: Opened the Town Hearing by reading the Hearing Notice

Mike Thibideau was nominated to be the moderator and all approved.

Mike Thibideau was sworn in.

Cindy Abbott offered copies of the warrant and moratorium to the public.

Mike Thibideau reviewed the logistics of the meeting. He let all present know that the meeting is being recorded.

Steve Bennett announced that Mike Thibideau served as the chairman of the public utilities committee while in the state senate.

Open the Public Hearing Portion of the Meeting on the Moratorium.

Tyler Hadyniak, chairman of the planning board. He encouraged the individuals not to support the moratorium. He had previously supported it. The moratorium can be found by the PUC to be not good for the town. The moratorium must be needed and prove public harm. It should be developed to prevent public harm. We do have an ordinance in town that is adequate to address the use of high power lines. High impact transmission line. The moratorium would disallow any person from testing the suitability from a high impact transmission line. If the town is directed to evaluate the concerns then wouldn't they be required to test the reliability of the transmission lines. If the moratorium is passed it would prevent the town from testing the suitability of the high impact lines. He feels we should defeat the moratorium and create an ordinance to address the town's concern with regard to high impact transmission lines. He feels that the moratorium could be found invalid and it would not allow us to create an ordinance.

Samantha Turner: resident of the North Palermo Road. She spoke about health and socio-economic concerns. Please see the hand out she provided.

MaryAnne Bennett: she agrees with both Samantha and Tyler, if Tyler is correct and we draft a moratorium we will have difficulty. She found that LSPower is scheduled to move forward in 2024. She feels we should be the ordinance in place and then have a moratorium if necessary.

Chuck Hadyniak: asked if the town attorney reviewed the moratorium.

Steve Bennett stated that yes our attorney had looked at it and Steve reviewed the ordinances from the other towns.

Lissa W: Has MMA reviewed these moratoriums and did the MMA attorneys reviewed this. She stated that on a policy level it is tough for a town to decide what is the best way to do this. She would like to know more about the legal implications of the moratorium. She feels making a statement is important.

Steve Bennett: Moratoriums are the right of the town. There is no guarantee that the moratorium will accomplish what we want as a town. MMA offers free advice but they will not defend us. We have an experienced attorney who will defend the town.

Mr. Thibiduea asked for clarification

Kevin Millany: He stated that at a meeting LSPower stated that if the state agrees they can move forward.

Blake Webber: We need to look at this as a community and take care of each other.

Elaine Higgins: It appears that we need a lot more information. She spoke to imminent domain. How do they determine compensation? She agrees with Tyler that we should vote down the moratorium and further assess how we can effectively deter LSPower. She thinks citizens should meet and develop an ordinance.

Cindy Abbott stated that we cannot do have it ready by the November 11th

Mr. Gagnon: feels that they will not be offering fair compensation. He feels it is a slippery slope. How do you go green if you are killing all the green.

Samantha Turner: She thought that the moratorium was to give us 6 months to review what we need.

Steve Bennett: stated it is for 6 months. He spoke of the East West Corridor. Irving Oil is the biggest landowner in the state of Maine. He spoke on burying the power lines as opposed to above ground. He feels that the below ground would be a better choice. He read the email from LS Power to the Selectpeople in Albion. LSPower said they would depreciate the value of the power lines. They suggested a TIF district. There are 2 alternate routes. 2,1/2 miles in Freedom. He feels they will pick the path of least resistance. He spoke of Flagstaff, Maine. LS Power has buried direct current.

Laura Greeley: if non-residents want to speak they can ask for permission to speak. She is voting for the moratorium and feels that it makes a statement. She asked the residents that are here how many of them have received a letter. She asked if anyone was supportive of LSPower.

Chuck Hadyniak: asked if the Selectboard is going to direct the planning board to develop an ordinance. He asked if everyone should have an opportunity to vote on this.

Steve Bennett: state that every resident in town got a notice about the vote this afternoon. Laura Greeley stated that this moratorium is for the benefit of the citizens of Freedom.

Chuck Hadyniak questioned the potential of the legality of the moratorium.

Steve Bennett stated that there are more people here than at our town meetings and select board meetings. It is a 6 month deal.

Phil Bloomstein, he feels this is getting messy. He feels not having a moratorium takes away everyone's voice here. He would like to see people have a vote and express their feelings. We have 6 months to work with this. He is in favor of the moratorium. He feels that it sends a message from the people.

Courtney Abbot: she feels we should vote, make a decision and move along.

Heather Donahue asked if Tyler has any president of a moratorium standing in the way. She feels transmission should be where the demand is.

Tyler Hadyniak stated that he is trying to avoid us being in a bad position in the future because of the moratorium. He thinks the purpose is to speak smarter.

Craig asked if Tyler works for LS Power. DC power is a lower health risk. He has a background in electrical issues.

Tyler Hadyniak stated that Craig could not do the research based on what the moratorium says. Tyler wants it all explored. Under his interpretation of the moratorium we couldn't do the research.

Jonathan Shaw spoke, he has 70 acres in Freedom, LSPower can apply to the PUC Monday morning if they wanted to. He feels it is very important to send a message. It gives the town 180 days to create an ordinance.

Ryan Willette, was the final outcome on the LS Power survey? 51 people who responded to the survey were strongly opposed

Samantha Turner understands that Tyler is trying to protect the town. She feels that it will give us the next 6 months to develop and support an ordinance. She feels we are being targeted as a community.

David Spencer has had a farm for 35 years. The powerline would be going over the northwest corner of his land. He feels that LS Power is just making money at our expense. He is in favor of the moratorium.

Ms. Bennett asked for clarification about having time to work on the ordinance. She wants to know if the ordinance could be deemed invalid. If the moratorium goes into effect with the new laws it could be something that LS Power could strike down.

Samantha Turner asked if we could work on the ordinance during the 6 month period, but could we then pass it at the end of the 6 months.

Tyler Hadyniak responded no.

Amanda Jamison said the line is going right through your property. She is not in favor of LS Power going through Freedom. Could we change the one line in the moratorium so it could be passed. The testing/suitability.

Tyler Hadyniak responded that there are three things that he is concerned about the moratorium. He feels that it must be needed to be valid.

Rick : moved that we go to a vote, it was moved and seconded

Laura Greely asked if we could

Ryan Willette made a motion to end the public hearing and the majority agreed.

Mike Thibideau read Article 4 to the people in attendance.

Clara Alvarez: is going to abstain and she wants to make sure that what we are doing is valid before we work on another ordinance.

Elaine Higgins: Stated that we should vote it down

Mike Thibideau called for a vote and 24 people were in favor and 6 were opposed. 1 person abstained.

Article 4 passed as written.