**Meeting Minutes**

**Freedom Board of Selectmen**

**Date: 3-13-2023**

***Approved 3/20/2023***

**In attendance:** Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette,  Elaine Higgins,Travis Price, Jim Waterman, Beth Owen-Mishou,Cindy Abbott, Meredith Coffin, Jasmine Willette, Jacob Brugger, Josh Suitor, Laura Greeley, Elenore MacMakin (via zoom), Tyler Hydiniak (via zoom), Alyssa Brugger, Nathan McCann

**New Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 431 235 8359**

**Passcode:  TownMeet**

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda:  Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6pm.
   * Ron Price welcomed Ryan Willette to the board.  Ryan Willette introduced himself.  Has been a lifelong resident of Freedom.
2. Nomination of chairman:  Steve Bennett made a motion to elect Ron Price as chairman of the select board and Ryan Willette seconded, all approved.
   * Ron made a motion to accept the select board policies as stated, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.  The policies are now in effect.  The signature page was signed.
     + Ron Price made a motion for the Order of Municipal Officers Pursuant to36 M.R.S.A 906 …. tax paperwork be signed, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
     + Annual renewal of Select Board Policies.  Ron Price made a motion that these be signed, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
     + Steve Bennett suggested that Ryan read them. Ron Price mentioned that they can be amended at any time.
3. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary’s Report: Steve Bennett moved to accept the minutes as presented, Ron Price seconded and all approved.
4. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports:  Jim Waterman
   * Christy and Ryan Willette will need a NIMS  class 700,  Jim Waterman will provide to both.  It is a 3 hour class and a test at the end.
   * Unity Ambulance was not available for the call yesterday.  LIberty Ambulance responded.
5. Public Works Director Report: Travis Price
   * Travis had a question about the dead end roads and asked if we need to put up signs.  Jim Waterman asked if the town wanted to put signs on non-town roads (lanes, roads).  Travis expressed that he would like to stay away from non-town maintained roads.
     + Ron Price made a motion to put dead end signs on all town maintained roads where applicable, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
   * The ABS control module has been returned to the truck parts company so the refund should be forthcoming.
   * The former Anderson house is now posted for no trespassing.
   * The fire hydrant is dug out by The Lost Kitchen
   * Truck #7 is back in service after being repaired.
6. Treasurer’s Report: Cindy Abbott
   * Payroll warrant $6331.33, A/P warrant 19,077.52
   * Karen Olivera (auditor) and Cindy Abbot will be working on a Trio issue.
   * Sandra Abbott Stout did not receive her tax bill and was concerned that her name was in the unpaid tax list.  Steve asked if the town could waive the penalty. The town had not sent her a bill.  Cindy Abbott stated that we are not required to send out a tax bill.
     + Steve Bennett asked how many did not get a tax bill.  Cindy Abbott stated that there were issues with the copier and the post office.
   * Steve Bennett made a motion that they approve the payroll warrant in the amount of Payroll warrant $6331.33, A/P warrant 19,077.52, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
   * The town office will close at noon on the 22nd.
7. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report:  Cindy Abbott
8. Citizen’s Issues and Questions
   * Nathan McCann:  He was concerned about flying the Ukrainian flag in front of the town hall. The question arose about the legality of flying a foreign flag on town property.
     + Ron Price responded that he is comfortable with it being there.  Ron will look into the legality of having the flag there.
   * Ellie MacMakin asked about the property at 140 Pleasant Street.  Ron suggested that she contact Cindy regarding the bank that owns the property.
   * Meredith Coffin greeted Ryan Willette.  She brought up a concern regarding the town clerk and treasurer’s positions being combined.  She likes the idea of them being two separate positions.  She asked when the town will be moving toward separating the positions.  Steve Bennett responded that within the next months they would be assessing this.  He then explained why he wrote them as he did in the budget. Ron Price stated that we have hired a deputy clerk and treasurer and that their role is that they are the second pair of eyes. Steve Bennett stated that it was his understanding that positions were separated years ago.
   * Laura Greeley:  asked about the 6.5% tax increase based on $50,000 put back into the budget.  She would like to know how we got down from 6.5 to 2.5%.  Steve Bennett responded that there was a 6.5% increase to the towns budget, then when we commit the taxes in June we will apply state revenue sharing and excise taxes and other revenue and this year some money from the undesignated fund balance.  The final tax increase to the town should be about 2.5%.
   * Asked about a porta potty at the boat landing.  Ryan Willette made a motion to put a handicapped accessible porta potty at the boat landing and park from May 1st to October 1st. Ron Price seconded.  This would be paid for by the recreation committee.
   * Ron Price spoke to the sheriff's department about the landing.  There is an ordinance that it is closed from dusk to dawn.  The sheriff’s office does not enforce town ordinances.
   * Travis asked if the state provides funding for the boat ramp.
9. Review Correspondence
10. Town Officials Reports
    * Code Enforcement Officer: Jackie Robbins reported that we are not charging enough for our permits.
    * Health Official
    * School Board Director
    * General Assistance Officer:  Needs to be replaced.  Ryan Willette agreed to take on the job, he accepted, asking that Cindy Abbott assist with the first few cases.  Ryan requested that his cell phone be used.
    * Plumbing Inspector
    * Solid Waste Director
    * Animal Control Officer
11. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
    * Planning Board
    * Recreational Committee:
      + Posting that April 1st (saturday) they will do an Easter program.
        - 3 baskets, boy/girl/baby
        - Hiedi Smith made a donation to the town to raffle off.
        - Ryan Willette asked about volunteers.
    * Appeals Board
    * Charter Committee:
      + They have a draft together and are getting ready to solicit legal advice from Atty Bill Kelly.
        - Tyler Hydiniak reported that the MMA attorney stated that they do not review Charters as a general policy.  KVCOG is going to look at the charter and review it as a probe.  Tyler is willing to work with Bill Kelly.
        - Meredith asked Tyler to send a copy of the charter draft to Ryan Willette.  The document is for viewing only but comments can be made.
          * Steve Bennett made a motion that Bill Kelly review our proposed town charter and that Tyler Hydiniak work with him to finalize it so it can be presented at a town meeting, Ron Price seconded the motion and all approved.
    * Historical Society
    * Cemetery Committee
    * Budget Committee
    * CDAC Committee: March 22 at 6pm
12. Old Business
    * Elaine Higgins mentioned that Matt Wagner will be here on Friday at 7:30 to work on the heat pumps.  Ron Price said that he would be here.
    * Ron Price will make sure that the “Happy Stitchers” will need to be let in to the town office.  Ron Price said that he would do that.
    * Condemned Buildings:  Ron Price asked if we have the decree that was provided to Jason Young and asked what is the time line of what needs to be done.  February 28th has 45 days to provide a plan with DEP approval by April 14, 2023.
    * Fisher property:  Ron Price asked if we could burn that property.  Steve Bennett stated that a special permit could be acquired.  Ron Price stated that now and for about 6 weeks would be the best time to do this.  Steve Bennett will call Atty Kelly for clarification.
13. New Business
    * Workshop for the Select Board:  Tuesday 3/21/2023 9 am.  At the town hall.
      + Abandoned roads
    * Need to review committee assignments.  Steve Bennett asked that Cindy Abbott let them know who is coming up to be done with their term.
    * Association of Public Works:  national organization with good information and programs for public works employees and select boards.  Ron Price stated that we could join as a town and it would cost $382 per year.  He is asking if we should pursue membership.  The membership fee is based on the size of the town.  Membership allows for discounts on participation in their sponsored events.
      + Steve Bennett made a motion that we join the Association of Public Works and Ryan seconded, The vote was postponed til next week.
    * There is a workshop for the pipeline, Ron will pass this information on to Travis Price and Jim Waterman.
    * Wilson Hess asked for a letter of support for the FCHS in hopes of acquiring a grant to finish Keen Hall.  Ron Price wrote and read the letter of support.  Ron Price made a motion to sign the letter, Ryan Willette seconded it and all agreed.  (copy attached to minutes).
14. Date of Next Meeting:  3/20/2023 at 6 pm.
15. Adjourn:  Ron Price made a motion to adjourn at 7:35 pm.