

Town of Freedom Select Board Minutes
September 6, 2022

Present: Elaine Higgings, Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Jim Waterman and Eleanor MacMakin
Present on zoom: Cindy Abbott

Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Motion by Elaine, 2nd Ron, unanimous: To accept August 29, 2022 minutes as amended and placed on file. Eleanor will make some edits from each Select person before filing.

FVFD: Jim Waterman reported the FVFD will hold a business meeting September 19, 2022 with a preliminary meeting September 12, 2022 to discuss the upcoming tabletop exercise scheduled for October 25, 2022 from 6 to 8 pm. He submitted for signature the form needed to proceed with the exercise, and Ron signed it. In addition Jim is looking for volunteers and Steve Bennett will take part in the exercise.

The starter for Truck 1 (Tanker) was repaired by Gerald Burleigh of Starter/Alternator repair service in Montville, ME.

Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott reported this week the payroll warrant in the amount of \$7,328.99 and the A/P warrant in the amount of \$23,039.44. The ending checkbook balance is \$292,208.46

Motion by Elaine, 2nd Steve unanimous: To accept the treasurer's report and pay the Payroll warrant in the amount of \$7,328.99 and the A/P warrant in the amount of \$23,039.44.

Citizens Issues: None

Public Works: Ron Price ordered 2 Labor Law Poster for \$42.75 each.

Correspondence:

Letter received from The board of Pesticides Control to distribute a flier to residents about a collection event during October, 2022. Pre-registration is required by September 26, 2022 to participate and dispose of unwanted or obsolete pesticides. This is not for hazardous household waste disposal. Ron reflected on the current farm practice on his land to discontinue row crops like corn and soybeans for the last 6 or 7 years. The PFAS issue was discussed noting that Goldtop dairy did not use sludge.

To do: Eleanor will post the flier on the Town website.

The MMA convention is scheduled for October 5 and 6, 2022 and Ron and Elaine will attend.

Ron will file a grant application for 2 projects with DEP for road repairs; The Hustis bridge on Mitchell Road and 2 culverts on Raven Road. The grant, if approved, will not cover 100% of the cost and the maximum request amount is \$150,000 per grant or project.

An email from Sierra.f.Millay@Maine.gov was received to notify the property owners impacted by the Village bridge repairs. The Grange Hall is a registered historic building and was thought to be the only property affected. Ron said he was working with the owner and will follow up on this matter.

Steve discussed the property tax stabilization Act Bill that goes into effect April 1, 2023. The forms are at the Town Office.

A letter was received from Efficiency Maine with a funding opportunity for rural EV charging capacity. It is a first come first serve basis and Steve was skeptical that the Town was in need, at this time.

A letter from Jackie Robbins was received regarding a new lot on Ayre Ridge Road sold to Deputy Violette that will be subject to a tax penalty of \$3,200 for conversion from farm land and open space.

To Do: Steve and Elaine will meet with Bill Kelly the Town Lawyer and Jackie Robbins this week. Ron has other commitments.

A letter was received from Peace Ridge Farm asking the Town's approval for a 5K run in October they will host. Steve noted they had planned for parking and had no objections.

Old Business:

The post office still needs to be power washed. The sink needs maintenance as well.

To Do: Ron will coordinate this job getting done.

Ron is scheduling a plumber, Andy Shute to replace the Town Office hot water heater with an efficiency on demand electric unit. This will help the rising costs of energy for the Town.

Steve did not receive a statement about driveway permits, a service provided by the Public Works Director.

To Do: Travis Price to write the statement and send to Steve Bennett.

The Solid Waste job description for the Director and assistant was discussed. Washing the truck needs to be one of the tasks but only the outside. Steve explained that no trash truck beds get washed for the health and safety of workers. Workers Comp for garbage truck drivers is high.

New Business:

An application for an abatement for a property next door to Keith Overlock was denied. Jackie Robbins reported her work to resolve the issue about the status of the dwelling and the water source.

Motion by Elaine, 2nd Ron, unanimous: Approve the decision to deny the abatement.

Joey Richardson is contesting his property tax bill and requested an abatement, assigned to Jackie Robbins.

Motion by Ron, 2nd Elaine, unanimous: Approve decision to grant the abatement.

Amanda wrote a job description for the Town Secretary position and Steve wants to add a new task to take minutes at the Annual Town Meeting. Currently Cindy Abbott records the vote count and the Board agreed it would be valuable to record any discussion as well.

To Do: Steve will write the added task description for Eleanor to post on the Town website.

Broadband Committee Report: Elaine reported that the committee will not use \$72,000 that is part of the American Rescue funds.

Meeting adjourned by Ron at 7:57 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Eleanor MacMakin