

Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 10-16-2023
Approved 10-29-2023

In attendance: Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Laura Greeley, Beth Owen-Mishou, Jim Waterman, Cindy Abbott, Elaine Higgins, Brian Murphy, Tyler Hadyniak (via zoom), Meredith Coffin, Dylan Turner, Billie Turner, Heather Donahue, Joe Freeman, Nathan McCann, Anne Marie Adamson (via zoom), Samantha Turner (via zoom), Pamela Herman (via zoom)

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

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Steve Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Announcements:
 - Town auditor will be attending next Monday night at 6pm.
 - Preserve Rural Maine had a rally at Capital Park on Saturday in Augusta many town members were there. There were around 100 people present from various towns. There were many speakers.
 - Tanya Blanchard created a 501-c-3 to represent all of the towns to be affected by high impact power lines. This would allow the not-for-profit to file for intervener status. Their application was denied.
3. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report:
 - Laura Greeley made a motion to accept the minutes as amended and place them on file, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
4. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
 - Steve Bennett mentioned that he is aware of the drug and alcohol policy. All of the fire personnel will sign a training form acknowledging the drug and alcohol policy.
 - Jim Waterman mentioned that Acorn Lane does not exist on 911. Ryan Willette reported that it is an extension of Oak Lane. Jim Waterman will add it to the 911.
 - Pressure washing has not yet been done, Ryan reported that Jeff will be coming to do it. Ryan Willette will also start work on the exterior wall repair.
 - Key Box and lock for fuel for the Fire Dept. Ryan Willette is researching this.
 - Hunter's Breakfast, November 11, 2023
5. Public Works Director Report:
 - Ryan Willette reported
 - Done with gravel
 - Done with Deer Hill
 - On Monday they will start grading all the roads.

- Loren is working on vehicle repair/ maintenance
 - They will attempt to get some salt later this week.
 - Should they fill the cellar holes in at public works? Steve Bennett stated that they should go ahead and do it.
 - Tool inventory list is almost complete.
 - Ryan Willette has asked the public works people to make a list of the tools needed.
 - Steve Bennett asked when the Fisher lot will be done. In about 3 weeks, was the response.
 - Steve Bennett asked about listing the items to be auctioned/ out up to bid. Ryan Willette is working on this.
 - Laura Greeley mentioned that they have been doing a great job with the completion of their road work and staying within their budgets.
6. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
- Payroll Warrant =\$ 7,402.85 A/P Warrant = \$ 21,262.32
 - Ending Checkbook balance \$208,995.80 March Cash Balance
 - Camden National = \$248,373.60
 - Two abatement requests: Tracy Bankenship for \$410.00 and William Overlock for \$854.50
 - Health Trust Enrollment Letter
 - Key Bank interest is for the Smithton Cemetery account.
 - Charitable Organizations is scheduled for 10-23-2023.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the Payroll Warrant =\$ 7,402.85 and the A/P Warrant = \$ 21,262.32, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
 - Meredith asked about the money we are using to pay for the town attorney. She asked how we would be paying for that. Steve Bennett stated that we had maxed out what we had budgeted but there were other accounts that we can use to cover those costs. (general government)
7. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
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8. Citizen's Issues and Questions
- Elaine Higgins asked if a decision has been made on a person to clean the office. The pay for that position is \$15 per hour. A coin flip determined which of the two candidates got the job. Elaine Higgins won the coin toss.
9. Review Correspondence
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10. Town Officials Reports
- Code Enforcement: Jackie Robbins
 - Assessors Agent:
 - Health Official:
 - School Board Director: Elenore Hess
 - General Assistance Officer: Ryan Willette
 - Plumbing Inspector:
 - Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein

- Animal Control Officer: Peter Nerber
- 11. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
 - Planning Board: October 24th is their next meeting
 - Recreational Committee:
 - Trunk or Treat October 28th
 - Appeals Board: Joint meeting with the select board next Thursday 19th at 6pm
 - Historical Society:
 - Auction October 23-27 online
 - Cemetery Committee
 - Budget Committee: Oct 18 at 6pm, next meeting
 - CDAC Committee:
 - Broadband Committee:
 - Ad Hoc Policy Committee:
 - Education and Enrollment Ad Hoc Committee: Laura Greeley
 - High Impact Power Line Ad Hoc Committee: Heather Donahue

12. Old Business

- Ryan Willette has been in contact with Josh Larabee discussing trash removal. They would prefer to work with the Town of Freedom. Currently Knox pays \$3500 per month to Sullivans that includes tipping fees. Ryan Willette suggested \$1100 per day would cover our costs and their tipping fees. They have about 380 stops. They currently pay \$42900 including tipping to Sullivan's. Ryan Willette said he would require someone to go with Joe to learn the runs. Cindy Abbot asked about the billing for these services. The \$1100 does include a second employee.
 - Meredith Coffin asked if our insurance would increase. Steve Bennett is going to research that tomorrow.
 - Bryan Murphy asked if other towns pick up trash for mutual towns.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that Ryan Willette call Josh Larabee and offer to charge \$1100 per day to cover our costs and their tipping fees for garbage collection, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
- Cindy Abbott mentioned that Unity soup kitchen has been dropping off 20 meals on Thursdays. Cindy has about 7 extras in the fridge if anyone needs it.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that we call our town atty and that he draft a letter regarding a former employee and a personnel issue, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Planning Board appointments:

13. New Business

- Laura Greeley proposed to create a committee to address the decrease in educational enrollment. She feels it is a serious concern because it decreases the money we are receiving per student. Laura Greeley is on the committee, Billie Turner will be a member, Allison Avery, and Alyssa Bruggger. They will work to create a survey to determine how many students from Freedom are not being sent to the public school. What they

determine will be presented to the school board. She is hoping the school board will be open to listening to parent concerns.

- Steve Bennett made a motion that we form an education and enrollment ad hoc committee, chaired by Laura Greeley, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that they appoint Palmer Pearson to the planning board for a 5 year term beginning 2023, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that they appoint Prentice Grassi 5 year term beginning 2023, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that they appoint Peter Abello 5 year term beginning 2023, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion that they appoint Kevin Malady 5 year term beginning 2023, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
- Abatements:
 - Annie and Brian Jones homestead error, they were charged twice and an acreage error. \$563.93 Ryan Willette and Laura Greeley asked if the homestead was a credit or debit. Further information is needed.
 - Tracy Blankenship: homestead was omitted, \$410 request,
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to abate Tracy Blakenship \$410, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
 - William Overlock: requested an abatement for the condition it is in in the amount of \$854.50, they put it on hold to further research.
 - Avian Haven: home used for staffers, \$2281.93 will be taxed.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to make a supplemental tax warrant (bill) to Avian Haven for a home used for staffers in the amount of \$2281.93, Laura Greeley seconded and all approved.
- Steve Bennett made a motion to direct the planning board to write a high impact transmission line ordinance, separate from the solar array ordinance and separate from amending the commercial development review ordinance, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
 - The select board asked on the 2nd of October the Planning Board to write a high impact transmission line ordinance. Instead, the Planning Board combined ordinances. This the above motion was proposed. The moratorium on Sept. 30th provided specific directions to write a high impact transmission line ordinance. He also spoke about the rally and that the ordinances should be written quickly.
 - Discussion: The planning board wrote an ordinance which combined the solar array and high impact transmission line ordinance. The select board opposes this and would like the ordinances to be separate.
 - Discussion: Tyler Hadyniak asked why they, the planning board, are receiving this information now and why not after the moratorium

vote. Steve clarified that it needs to be done quickly and needs to stand alone. It is the priority over the solar array ordinance.

- Tyler Hadyniak asked how this meets the criteria presented by Atty. Kelly. Steve Bennett said he wants it done right but expediently.
 - Ryan Willette asked how long the planning board has been working on the solar array ordinance. Tyler stated earlier this year.
 - Laura Greeley asked how quickly could the planning board get this done, if Steve is able to provide them with the ordinances from other towns.
 - Tyler responded that they would have to schedule out the hearings on about 5-6 topics. The board asked if those hearings could be combined.
 - Citizens at the meeting stated that they would like this done quickly and correctly.
 - Ryan Willette asked what Tyler thought was a realistic timeline would be to write this ordinance if they had something to work from. Tyler stated that it depends on how thorough the planning board is. Can this process be expedited? Could the planning board and select board work together? Heather Donahue stated that she has copies of two ordinances that have been passed and 2 that are in process. She will send these to the select board and Tyler. Tyler Hadyniak stated that they are not trying to stall what is happening. They have increased their meetings to twice a month. They felt they were following Bill Kelly's directives.
 - Ryan Willette asked if it could have been done within 60 days. Tyler said that he thinks it is a possibility.
 - Steve Bennett made a motion that the select board go into executive session for 1 MRSA 405 (6) A and 1 MRSA 405 (6) E, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
 - They came out of executive session at 9:05pm and no decisions were made.

14. Date of Next Meeting: Monday, October 23, 2023. 6pm

15. Adjourn: Steve Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.