

**Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 3/9/2026**

Approved 3-16-2026

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

Select Board Meeting

In attendance: Laura Greeley, Lissa Widoff, Rene Ouellet, Beth Owen-Mishou, James Hayes, Jim Waterman, Stan and Kerri Taylor, Elaine Higgins, Richard Bickford, Kory Boulter, Meredith Coffin, Joe Freeman, Brian Murphy, Kyle Price (via zoom), Matthew Grotton (via zoom), Summer Grotton (via zoom), Dylan Turner (via zoom), Katie Ouellet, Bob Kanzler, David Adamson, Thomas Clay, Karen Bohannon

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Laura Greeley called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.
 - **Rene Ouellet made a motion to go into executive session for 1 MRSA 405 (6) A, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**
 - They came out of executive session at 6:05pm and decisions were made.
 - **Rene Ouellet made a motion to approve the minutes from 3-2-2026 as amended and place them on file, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**
2. Announcements:
 - Rene Ouellet thanked the board and the town for electing him to be a select board member.
3. Fire Chief Reports: Jim Waterman
 - Jim Waterman will let everyone at his upcoming Fire Department Meeting know about the Board Position with the Unity Ambulance.
 - Elaine Higgins provided a list of emails individuals provided. Lissa Widoff accepted them.
4. Treasurer's Report: Contessa Mancini (not present)
 - A/P warrant: \$87234.58
 - Payroll warrant: \$6138.15
 - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to pay the payroll warrant for 3-9-2026 in the amount of \$6138.15, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
 - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to pay the A/P warrant for 3-9-2026 in the amount of \$87234.58, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**

5. Public Works: (pending)
 - The roads have been posted.
6. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
 - Cash reports for January and February were presented
 - 2025 Taxes: 71 bills outstanding \$74884 still due
 - 2024 Taxes: 24 outstanding 34415.29 still due
 - 2023 Taxes: Foreclosure 3/6/2026
 - Information regarding this was presented to the Select Board: Contessa will have to start that process.
 - Excise Tax Report 2025-26 January – March
 - Elections are Friday 8-8
 - Town Meeting 10 am at the Performing Arts Center on Saturday March 14, 2026
 - Mailing going out tomorrow.
7. Correspondence:
 - Document Shredding Day: Town of China
8. Citizens Issues:
 - Meredith Coffin: Shared her observations from the meeting on 2-28-2026. Since no voting has taken place, how do you know that it was the feelings of the majority of the citizens in Freedom. Laura Greeley stated that the select board refused to sign the Consent Decree prior to listening to the feelings of the citizens of Freedom. Rene Ouellet clarified that they had not decided what they were going to vote prior to that meeting. He wanted to hear the opinions of the people in town. Meredith Coffin asked that it not be called the majority because there was no count. Lissa Widoff further clarified what went into the process of making the decision.
 - Richard Bickford: asked if the Consent Decree was approved prior to the meeting with the Public. The response was that they had negotiated with the Attorney and the other party. He wanted to know what was approved by the select board. Laura Greeley stated that a lot of people wanted the select board to sign the agreement. Atty. Kelly recommended it from a financial risk management perspective. Rene Ouellet stated that the negotiations were confidential.
 - Meredith Coffin: stated that the citizens really do not know what the background is on all of the negotiations. Rene Ouellet reminded that we are headed into a court case and that may be why Atty Kelly is stating that they cannot share what was debated.
 - Kyle Price: the truck was #3 Sterling and it should be in the files.

- Meredith Coffin asked if someone running for office could speak at our town meeting. Cindy Abbot stated that they could come prior to the meeting starting and let her know that they want to speak.
- Patrick Terry: requested that a letter he wrote be read. He appreciated people coming out and sharing their voices.
 - **Rene Ouellet made a motion to place Patrick Terry's letter into the minutes, Lissa Widoff seconded. This motion was rescinded.** The letter will be included in the minutes.
 - Rene Ouellet read the email prior to the end of the meeting.

9. Town Officials Reports

- Code Enforcement: Cindy Abbott
- Assessors Agent: Jackie Robbins (not present)
- Health Official: Patricia Ashland (not present)
- School Board Director: Eleanor Hess (not present)
- General Assistance Officer: Rene Ouellet
 - There was a GA inquiry that did not get to an application.
 - There was a conversation about the Freedom Heating Assistance Fund.
 - **Rene Ouellet made a motion to approve the application for the Freedom Heating Assistance fund, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**
- Plumbing Inspector: Cindy Abbott
- Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein (not present)
- Animal Control Officer: Johnna Hatt (not present)
- Town Boards & Committee Reports:
 - Planning Board: Tyler Hadyniak
 - Meeting tomorrow evening
 - Home occupations
 - Commercial Development: what are the elements of revisiting an already approved permit?
 - Voting on Friday will be on the Mobile Home ordinance.
 - Recreational Committee: Chair yet to be determined
 - Easter Party is on the 28th and begins at 10am
 - Field Cleanup day April 20th at 10:30
 - Appeals Board: pending new appointment
 - Application was received and will be discussed.
 - Cemetery Committee: Steve Holmes
 - Budget Committee: Laura Greeley
 - Meeting in April TBD

- CDAC Committee: Lex Bennett (not present)
 - Joint meeting with Comp Plan committee on the 12th of March
- Broadband Committee: Phil Bloomstein (not present)
- Ad Hoc Policy Committee: Elaine Higgins
- Comp Plan Committee:
 - Meeting Thursday
- Historical Society:

11. Old Business:

- Prep for town meeting: Walt Whitcomb will moderate the town meeting.
 - There will need to be edits on the floor as numbers did not transfer correctly. Amendments will be made at the meeting for small errors.
- Posting of the Roads: A form was created and it is only for mud season. It will be printed on fluorescent paper and laminated. March 9 – May 15th. Once it is posted if someone goes on the road with an ATV then the Sherrif can enforce it.
 - **Rene Ouellet moved to approve the posting of the draft for closing specific roads during mud season, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**
 - Rene Ouellet stated that they need a comprehensive list of the roads.
- Lissa Widoff presented a draft letter to those enrolled in the land use programs. Some people have enrolled and some are out of compliance. Two letters were presented. A one-page letter was presented as well with resources to where they can go for more information and to enroll.
- Permit Fees: Lissa Widoff presented fees from KVCOG.
 - Building Permits:
 - Residential home new construction we are charging \$40 other towns are charging by square footage. Lissa Widoff suggested \$100 or .15 cents per square foot. Renovations/ Additions was a separate charge and she presented that information.
 - Residential home new construction: \$100
 - Addition/Renovation: \$100
 - Manufactured Home: \$100
 - Mobile Home: \$100
 - Tiny Homes: \$100
 - Accessory Structure, Shed, Deck, Pool, Garage: \$50
 - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to change the fee schedule for building permits to the following:**
 - **Residential home new construction: \$100**

- **Addition/Renovation: \$100**
 - **Manufactured Home: \$100**
 - **Mobile Home: \$100**
 - **Tiny Homes: \$100**
 - **Accessory Structure, Shed, Deck, Pool, Garage: \$50**
- , Rene Ouellet seconded and all improved.**

12. New Business:

- The select board approved to have the monitor heaters cleaned in the annex. It was suggested that heat pumps be considered in the future
 - **Lissa Widoff made a motion to contact MA Haskins to come and clean the heating systems in the annex, Rene Ouellet seconded and all approved.**
- Dana Roberts will be coming within the next 2 weeks to look at the truck and diagnosis then give his recommendations about what we should do with truck #6.
- Public Works Job Descriptions:
- Estimates for Electrical Work: Rene Ouellet spoke with Lee regarding the 3 different sets of lights. Lee reported that the office lights are shut off when they leave. It does not appear to be a wiring issue.
- Email distribution: will be sent this evening
- Trio Training is on March 20th from 9-11. April 1-2 will be the installation and go live.
- County Budget Meeting: This past Friday. It will go to public hearing.
- St. Patrick Day Breakfast at Freedom Congregational Church at 7:30am

13. Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 16, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

15. Adjourn: **Rene Ouellet made a motion to adjourn the Select Board Meeting at 8:35pm, Lissa Widoff seconded and all approved.**

Recording Information:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/tBchGzlhZa-jtddYoWmyh6TtxREOQS_u5C1TkaWzlgS7-GbPPkNIIIDseK6qN1YDL.xzXZot_Lx6A7xvIv

Passcode: 0xM2+zKX