

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Freedom Board of Selectmen**  
**Date: 1-30-2023**  
**Approved on 2/6/2023**

**In attendance:** Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Elaine Higgins, Travis Price, Beth Owen-Mishou, Ryan Hall, Cindy Abbott, Bruce Cook, Kurt Burrows, Ellie MacMakin, Joe Freeman, Tyler Hadyniak (via zoom)

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm
2. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Steve Bennett moved to accept the minutes from 1/23/2023 as amended and Ron Price seconded, all approved.
3. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
  - o Elaine Higgins and Ron Price worked on getting a SAMS number for the town. This will be needed for the grants. They will continue to complete the application.
  - o Steve Bennett is in agreement with the capital reserve account for the fire department. The \$4000 carryover will be rolled into the capital reserve account.
  - o Incident with Bolster trash truck on its side on Smithton Rd. They went to assist and the Fire Truck#1 also went into the ditch. Both vehicles were extricated and no one was hurt. There was no damage to the tanker. The Bolster's truck had damage to the cab due to hitting a tree. There were no fuel spills. Traffic had to be diverted.
  - o Bruce Cook and Kurt Burrows came to speak to the Select Board about the Unity Ambulance Service. They are looking to move to full time personnel, and as of September they anticipate having 3 ambulances. Typical staffing is Advanced EMT and at times a paramedic as well. They have approximately 600 calls per year. They cover 150 square miles from Unity. Thorndike, Unity, Troy, Burham, Unity Plantation and ½ of Knox. There is currently no cost to the town. They are a 501-C3 with 36 employees. They have not recently had a staffing shortage. Average response time is 6-7 minutes. The furthest section of Freedom from their station is 17 miles/27 minutes. There is no bill if they do not transport. Their equipment is up to date. They are asking us to consider them as an option to Delta. No contract is required. Unity Ambulance would let the dispatch center know that Freedom was covered by them and not Delta if Freedom chose to work with them.
4. Public Works Director Report: Travis Price
  - o The roof was leaking at the garage: fried the internet and damaged the modem. Everything has been fixed and is now working. The roof was

assessed by Kelly Stacey from Mitchell's Roofing and Sheet Metal. They removed the ice from the roof and the problem appears to be resolved. They will come back when it is warmer to fix some issues.

- There was a loud bang at the post office and there was a gas odor. The damper exhaust line going into the chimney blew off. Travis assessed the situation and called the appropriate people at Haskel to come and repair the damper. Travis Price and Steve Bennett will check in with the post office tomorrow to make sure it is resolved. Ron Price will talk to Jeff Holmes about painting the ceiling and walls in the lobby and cleaning the light down.
  - Lots of sand is being taken from the town garage. Each Freedom citizen can get 2, 5-gallon containers of sand per storm.
  - Travis has requested that he be informed ahead of time about the times and dates of the budget committee meetings.
5. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
- Payroll warrant \$6057.43, A/P warrant \$101,103.43
  - Cindy Abbott requested to use the credit card to make a Sam's order to cover the Winterfest Items etc. Ron Price made a motion to allow Cindy Abbott to use the credit card to make the Sam's Club order, Elaine Higgins seconded and all approved.
  - School payment of \$56,629.84 was made.
  - Received State Revenue Sharing received in the amount of \$15,240
  - Eliane Higgins made a motion that the payroll warrant be paid in the amount of \$6057.43 and the A/P warrant in the amount of \$101,103.43, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
6. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report
7. Citizen's Issues and Questions
8. Review Correspondence:
9. Town Officials Reports
- Code Enforcement Officer: Jackie Robins was here today and they spoke about the marijuana grow and what the process is to determine if it is legal. Jackie Robins is going to continue to research the situation.
  - Health Official
  - School Board Director
  - General Assistance Officer: 2 requests but no applications
  - Plumbing Inspector
  - Solid Waste Director
  - Animal Control Officer:
    - Elaine made a motion that we give Ron Price permission to sign and send in the contract to the Waterville Humane Society, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
10. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
- Planning Board
  - Recreational Committee
  - Appeals Board
  - Charter Committee: February 7th 6 pm

- The select Board will need to meet prior to the meeting. They will meet Feb 7th at 9am.
- Historical Society: Winterfest has been postponed until 2-11-2023 due to the forecasted cold weather.
- Cemetery Committee
- Budget Committee: February 8th (Wednesday) at 6 pm (tentative date)
- CDAC Committee:
  - Ann Hubbard, from Knox, has been appointed to be in charge of grant writing for Knox. She will work on the community resiliency committee. They are working on a solar array that would support municipal building electrical use for Knox, Freedom and Unity. Old Business:
- Darren Mehuren, first selectman in Brooks, spoke with Steve Bennett about a civil court action and Peace Ridge Sanctuary. The court found in favor of Peace Ridge on 3 lots. They exempted 2 lots from property taxes and Brooks is going to appeal the ruling. Darren asked if the town of Freedom would be interested in signing on to the case, amicus. Ron Price and Elaine Higgins suggested consulting with Atty. Kelly to determine if there is any benefit to our town to associate with this case.
- Facility use agreement has been sent out to the school and we have not yet heard back from them. Steve Bennett will follow up on this. We have the intermediate school gym.
- Steve Bennett asked Cindy Abbott to give us a breakdown on the electric bill. We were charged for electric hook up even though there was no electric use at the historical society building on the north Palermo Road.
- This is a notice of hearing for dangerous buildings to two different property owners in town. Hearing to be held February 21st at 4pm in the town office. Steve Bennett will clarify with Atty. Kelly regarding how and if the public should be notified.
- Coleen Smith reached out to Elaine Higgins for information and to talk about new grant applications for vegetable processing plant on the old Skidgel Lot and wanted contact information.
- Cover for the Town report, would like it to be the memorial. Beth Owen-Mishou will take a picture of the Veterans Memorial. All were in favor.
- Dedication to Hazel Cross, all were in favor.

#### 11. New Business

- Update on UARRC: Phil Bloomstein will be in the interim chair until the spring elections. They are going to write a mission statement. Ellie MacMakin asked if the Select Board had any input. Steve Bennett asked that a draft be provided once it is completed. The current statement is too specific and needs to be updated. Ms MacMakin read the current proposed modifications. Once the draft is completed she will present it to the town. The old mission statement is on their website.
- Ellie MacMakin presented a base map that she created. She will be creating one for a new family in town on Deer Hill Road. She has a concern about the springs beside the road on High Street. She is

suggesting that the road be made into a T thus avoiding the wet in the road.

- Travis reviewed what the state had done in the past in this area.
- Travis made a request that a blurb be added to the town letter specifically stating not to plow snow from driveways into culvert openings.
- Beth will add to the website the town's policy of the town office being closed if the schools are closed.
- The town's office closure policy was reviewed. An addition was proposed: The town office will follow the same closing schedule as RSU3 due to weather. In the event of late openings, the town office will only be delayed by one hour. Steve Bennett will make the proposed corrections and provide them to Cindy Abbot for the town mailing.

12. Date of Next Meeting: Monday February 6th, 2023

13. Adjourn: Ron Price made a motion to adjourn at 7:58pm, Elaine Higgins seconded and all approved.