

Meeting Minutes Freedom Board of Selectmen

Date: 6-20-2023

Minutes to be reviewed

In attendance: Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Jim Waterman, Trudy Price, Kyle Price, Bob Kanzler, Ben Feeney, Elaine Higgins, Jasmine Willette, Tyler Hadyniak, Nancy Farrar, Meredith Coffin, Billie Turner (via Zoom), Dylan Turner, Tammy Turner, Nathan McCann, Laura Greeley, Heather Donahue, Jake Brugger, Alyssa Brugger, Dawnella Sutton (via Zoom), Alexis Bennett, Joe Freeman

New Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 431 235 8395

Passcode: TownMeet

- Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
- Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Ron Price made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and put on file, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
 - Steve Noted the comment on prior meeting minutes that the comment about what he said was their mission statement is not his feelings. It currently states "Steve felt". Steve also wanted a correction to his comments on Waste Management, which was directly quoted from Bangor Daily News article, not his own opinion. The Solid waste correspondent is "Mike Carrol" not Carrow. On Page 5 yellow "xxx" should be Carlezon Raven. Page 3 fix Bennette to Bennett.
- Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
 - Knox Fire Protection: Jim called Knox Town about the 3-town contract and amount due. The amount for this year is \$3198.19. Payments due in June, September, and December. The contract will need to be redone at the next Knox town meeting. Jim believes the Select boards of the 3 towns worked together on that.
 - Fire Department received check from Central Maine Recovery. (3rd Party agency that we submit bills to for calls out for automobile accidents.) \$2271.60 which was turned into the Treasurer.
 - Emergency Management Directory: The towns emergency plan needs to be rewritten/updated every 2 years. Ryan updated as new Selectman. The second update is regarding the Freedom store if it could be reopened and have fuel. Public Works was added with 1000 gallons of diesel fuel stored. There is no longer a county Hazmat team. If we need to bring someone in it would be the Central Maine Emergency Response Team out of Waterville. Jim presented the plans for signatures by the Select Board. Note: Searsmont is hosting a class with Searsmont for Hazmat to fill empty positions.
 - Emergency Management Ordinance: Reviewed annually. No changes.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to sign both documents (Emergency Management Ordinance of the Town of Freedom and 2023 Emergency Operations Plan). Ron seconded. All approved.
 - Steve asked about satisfaction with the Unity ambulance – Jim stated that he is satisfied.
 - Elaine asked Jim about assistance regarding creating policies for another committee

- Public Works: Ryan Willette reported
 - Ryan dropped off Truck 3, maintenance is occurring on the vehicles/equipment, they are hoping to get some cold patching done this week. He has a list of signs that might need to be replaced that should be provided this week.

- Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott absent (Ron Price reported)
 - Payroll and Warrant \$4632.91 gross pay \$4077.44.
 - A/P warrant = 64,809.78 includes school payment for June.
 - March cash balance 208,995.80 Camden National Balance \$220,447.18 as of 6/20.
 - 6/28: 2 training classes with RHR Smith on audits and MTCCA Notary Public Training, Kristy is also attending this and will close office at noon that day
 - Received check for \$5600 from BBSC CPAs for Efficiency Maine.
 - School Budget passed by 55 votes.
 - Starting July 23, 2023 the new school payment will be \$60, 578.12.
 - Rene Oulett and Katie McDonald helped with counting and donated their time. Each worked 1.5 hours.
 - Town received a 30-day lien notice on the property the town bought from Frank Bailey. Carrie said she would not lien the property and that the assessor was out until 7/14/2023.
 - Letter was received from Bernstein, Shur,Sawyer and Nelson, P.A. asking for a 30-day extension to respond to the Select Board's request on the Beaver Ridge Wind, LLC, this was a certified letter.
 - Received a check for 5,600 from BBSC CPS's for Efficiency Maine
 - Ron made a motion to approve Treasurer report, Steve seconded, all approved.

- Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott – no report Cindy is off

- Citizen's Issues and Questions:
 - Laura Greeley provided school budget info - 4 towns failed the budget. The budget passed by only 55 votes. 25 of them came from Freedom.
 - E. Hess mentioned to her that a vote to close Brooks and Unity schools has been tabled due to needing more information. The suggestion to close these school is based on decrease in enrollment.
 - Laura spoke to Select Board about encouraging us to do more about the decreases in enrollment since much of the increase to our budgets is due this.
 - Nathan McCann requested if it would be possible to create a committee for understanding why kids aren't attending school. Steve feels the school board should address this instead of the town. Jake Brugger recommended a mailer questionnaire and having Elenore Hess take this info to the school board to proceed.
 - Tyler Hadyniak spoke about letter filed for a freedom of information access request regarding any alleged nepotism regarding resignation of town employee and rumors and accusations/conduct during a municipal meeting. He is seeking confirmation that it was received and response. Steve stated that it has been forwarded to town attorney for advice on how to proceed.

- Nathan McCann spoke about the 600 asylum seekers going to Unity to stay on college campus. Questioning what our Select Board could do if they don't have a place to go, allowing them to stay in Freedom. Concerns voiced about resources and needs for these people.
 - Elaine Higgins brought up that the county commissioners are seeking 5 more people to join. Do we want to send a Select Board member to participate in the county budget committee? No interest was voiced.
 - Steve spoke to the Triad newsletter regarding scams going on that residents can fall victim to. Town office usually carries copies if anyone is interested.
- Review Correspondence: Ron Price
 - Notices of woods operations. 50 acres by Bessey Development company property near 137.
 - Road mapping software is in.
- Town Officials Reports:
 - Code Enforcement Officer: n/a
 - Emergency Management Officer: n/a
 - Waste Management: n/a
 - Health Official: n/a
 - Assessors Report: n/a
 - Animal Control Officer: Peter Nerber – n/a
 - Health Committee: n/a
 - Planning Board: n/a
 - Recreational Committee: Alyssa Brugger
 - First Farmer's Market. 4/5 vendors in basement of Church and 20 visitors
 - Interest expressed in expanding the market to every Saturday
 - Alyssa Brugger spoke about need for snack shack key, cash box and key for that for Committee use
 - Spoke about lack of mowing of the baseball field
 - Discussed Veteran's board being placed in building instead of snack shack
 - Appeals Board: n/a
 - Charter Committee: Tyler Hadyniak
 - Charter passed 112 to 12. Recognition given to the subcommittee who placed signs around town. Charter Committee will now be dissolved based on no further business need. Minutes should be archived. Steve commended the creation of the documentation and efforts surrounding it.
 - Historical Society: n/a
 - Cemetery Committee: n/a
 - Budget Committee: n/a
 - CDAC Committee: Alexis Bennett
 - Working to submit the application for the Grant for the Skidgell lot on 6/30
 - BroadBand: Phil Bloomstein – Elaine Reported
 - Meeting on 6/28 open to the SWCBC members and will report back after
 - Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein
 - Joe Freeman reported ~5 tires on Mitchell Rd. with rims, not stickered.
 - School Board: n/a

- Old Business:
 - Heather Donohue now has a location to park with sign removed. This coming Friday Ryan will be looking at the work that was done and solutions for proceeding.
 - Audit meeting originally scheduled for 6/23 at 9am will be rescheduled to next week
 - Cindy had Select Board look at personnel filing system to purchase on Amazon
 - Ryan made a motion to approve the 25 pack for \$56.90, Steve seconded, all approved
 - Central Maine disposal will be coming out to look at the Fisher property to complete quotes on removal
 - Need to post ad for employee (Road Commissioner)
 - Ron got quotes by Porch Roofing for gutters that were overpriced on Town Office, and Election Hall . Ben Feeney will send over a recommended competitively priced company
 - 706-A form – Ron Price updated that the document was missing Bill Van Tounan’s name. Steve Bennett and Ryan Willette signed off but Ron had concerns about how quickly that occurred during the last meeting which was why he didn’t sign it until he had a chance to thoroughly review it. Ron was also concerned because his understanding was that Bill’s participation in this activity was free of charge, but he does not plan to analyze the data or do anything further. Steve responded that Bill did what was agreed upon to compose the 706-A and that it’s up to us what we do with the data. If the data is complex and we are unable to read it ourselves we will figure it out at that time and that it was a benefit to get it for free to begin with.
 - Elaine recommended the appeals board discuss the concerns between Steve and Ron as the conversation was becoming confrontational.
 - Trudy Price confronted Steve about not sharing information regarding the 706-A with Ron.
 - Debate was had regarding how the tax assessment would impact the town and how much the assessment might increase the school budget percentage we pay
 - Ron made a motion to buy a new toilet for the post office out of the post office, Steve seconded, all approved
- New Business: n/a
- Date of Next Meeting: Monday June 25th, 2023 at 6pm
- Adjourn: Ron made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04pm. Ryan seconded all approved.