

Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 3/20/2023

Approved 3/27/2023

In attendance: Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Elaine Higgins, Travis Price, Jim Waterman, Beth Owen-Mishou, Cindy Abbott, Meredith Coffin, Kirk Burrows, Reggie Cunningham, Barbara Littlefield, Ron Littlefield, Clint Spaulding, Christopher Spaulding, Nathan McCann, Kim Holmes, Steve Holmes, Samantha Whitaker, Matthew Whitaker, Jasmine Willette, Jacob Brugger (via zoom), Laura Greeley, Elenore MacMakin (via zoom), Tim Turner

New Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 431 235 8359
Passcode: TownMeet

1. Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6pm.
2. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Ron Price made a motion to accept the minutes as amended and Ryan Willette seconded, all approved.
3. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
 - o 2 calls today. One on Greeley Rd and one on Belfast Road. Unity Ambulance was called, Unity was paged but Delta had to come.
 - o Jim Waterman has training tonight.
 - o Kirk Burrows from Unity Ambulance came to discuss the problems that they are having with follow through. They have hired 3 EMT's this week and they have had some policy changes. Their goal is 24 hour coverage. They have posted positions for 2 new asst. Chiefs.
 - Tim Turner spoke and said that calls have gone out with no responses. He is concerned with this. These concerns were not present when we were using Delta. Fire Department members are frustrated. Unity responded that there are 34 people on their roster and he is concerned as well. Unity's mutual aid is with Liberty. Tim Turner stated that it is the time frame that is frustrating and concerning. Ryan Willette asked if with these changes it would help with the response time. Kirk stated that they are working with the dispatch regarding their page time. Ryan Willette asked if dispatch has a policy regarding how many times they page. It can be 3-4 minutes between pages, Kirk will ask them to make sure it is 2 minutes. Ryan Willette asked that if they have 24/7 coverage will there always be a person on duty and that that person would be the person responding to the call. Kirk confirmed that this was accurate. Ron Price asked if we are willing to keep on with this arrangement and if there will be immediate changes. Ryan Willette asked when it was going to occur. Kirk stated that April first is when their new policies will be in place.

- Kim Holmes stated they need time to get their practices working but if in 30 days we have the same issues we might need to have other arrangements.
 - Kirk Burrows stated that they had a meeting about this and he feels that his team is trying.
 - Jim Waterman requested that Jackie Robbins go out on a call. Ron Price will contact her again and make sure that she follows through.
- 4. Public Works Director Report: Travis Price
 - Sign order: 12 dead end signs(10 are spoken for), 4 no trespassing, he is short on posts so will need to get more.
- 5. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
 - Payroll Warrant: \$6565.61 Gross Pay: \$5649.00 A/P warrant: \$20,771.69
 - Karen and Cindy Abbott will be completing the budget on Friday.
 - Received cash from the town garage for \$350. For the sale of a used dump body.
 - Town office will be closed this Wednesday at noon.
 - Vital records training for Cindy Abbott and Kristy will be at a training on March 28th and 29th
 - Steve Bennett made a motion that the Payroll Warrant: \$6565.61 and A/P warrant: \$20,771.69 be paid, Ron Price seconded and all approved.
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- 6. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
- 7. Citizen's Issues and Questions
 - Elaine Higgins: trees are being cut across the road from her and there is no harvest permit to her knowledge. It is Norman Kirby's property. It appears that if you own the land you do not need a permit. If you sell the wood you have to have a permit, only if it goes to the mill, based on another citizen's report.
 - No permit on High Street and Jackie is looking into it.
 - Ronny Littlefield asked about the work that has been done on Deer Hill. He stated that the plow got stuck in the culvert this year.
 - Steve Bennett stated that the ditching of the Deer Hill Road is considered road maintenance and not major road maintenance.
 - Ron Price asked that people use polite language, as the discussion became contentious.
 - Laura Greeley: asked that when the taxes are committed, is the decision made in a Select Board meeting or in a workshop. Ron Price stated that it is discussed in a workshop then is voted on during a select board meeting. The only way she sees the 2% happening is if the 100,000 be applied to the taxes.
 - Ron Price stated that there are no guarantees and that he suspects that the school budget will probably be more than 1%.
 - Ron Price stated that he called MMA and asked about the Ukrainian flag being up on the building. With respect to being completely non-committable the only flag that will be posted on the building will be the

American Flag. Steve Bennette asked for clarification and Ron Price stated that what he said was accurate.

8. Review Correspondence

9. Town Officials Reports

- Code Enforcement Officer: Ron Price is waiting for a call back, from Jackie Robbins
 - building going in on High Street without a permit.
 - Situation on the Greeley Rd and North Palermo Rd.
 - Peace Ridge asked to apply for an abatement, but they are passed the deadline for making that request. Ron Price has suggested that they make an appointment to conference with them again. Steve Bennett stated that we have met with them in the past. He suggested that they double the amount Peace Ridge suggested at the last meeting, but has not spoken with them since.
 - Steve Bennette will contact them to set up a meeting with representatives from Peace Ridge.
- Health Official
 - Will need to go to the Greeley Rd.
- School Board Director:
 - March 30th at 6pm there is a meeting to present the budget at Mt. View School
- General Assistance Officer:
 - Ryan Willette made a motion to go to executive session for 1 MRSA 405 (6) E, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved. This occurred at 6:33pm. They came out of executive session at 6:40pm. No decisions were made but information was shared.
- Plumbing Inspector
- Solid Waste Director
- Animal Control Officer

10. Town Boards & Committee Reports:

- Planning Board
- Recreational Committee
 - They are going to be setting up a meeting. She is asking anyone who wants to meet contact Cindy Abbott
- Appeals Board
- Charter Committee:
 - It is being submitted to the town lawyer for review. Steve Bennett stated that it is still being reviewed.
- Historical Society
- Cemetery Committee:
 - Working on getting a VA stone.
- Budget Committee
- CDAC Committee
 - There is consideration to building a municipal solar array for 3 towns on the Skidgell Lot

- Kim Holmes asked if the grid is now full and if a solar farm went in could it even be used. Steve Bennette responded that for a smaller solar farm it would be ok if it was just to support the 3 towns and their municipal buildings.
- Acquiring a grant that would allow enough money to have an environmental company come in to assess the lot.
- Membership continues to increase and has gone from 5 to 12.
- Ron Price stated that he has confirmed with Wilson Hess that a small grid as they were looking at would be able to be used to support the town.
- Laura Greeley: asked if the town has looked at the price of selling the property versus how much we would be taking in with the solar array. Steve Bennette stated that it is grant money that would be used for the purchase and operate. He also said that there is some interest in their being a food processing plant. Ryan Willette asked if there was a plan for decommissioning of the solar arrays in 25 years. Ron Price stated that the first step is the environmental study. Ryan Willette asked if it was considered a floodplain and Ron Price stated yes.

11. Old Business

- Select Board Meetings: Ron Price suggested that they continue to meet of Monday nights at 6 pm. Steve Bennett moved to keep the meetings at Monday nights at 6pm, Ron Price seconded and all approved.
- Ron Price would like to join the National Public Works, Maine Chapter, At \$382/ year.
 - Kim Holmes asked how it benefits the town. Ron Price described what it offers in terms of training for all departments.
 - Ryan Willette asked Travice Price if he would attend the trainings. Ron Price clarified other trainings that they offered. Eliane Higgins further clarified the benefits of memberships. Travice Price had not looked at what they have to offer. He feels that if we would attend more than three trainings it might be worth it.
 - Agreement from RHR Smith regarding a non-attest agreement.

12. New Business

- Heat pumps are in and working and a new electrical panel is in. The hot water heater still needs to be installed. The cost before rebate was \$11,000 and after the rebate it was \$5600.
 - Kim Holmes asked where they were purchased. Ron Price stated that Upright energy was the winning bidder of 3.
- Elaine Higgins provided Ryan Willette with information from things she had done.
- Ron Price stated that it has been a year since the water has been tested. There are at least 2 tests that need to be done. Ryan Willette

made a motion that we get water tested from these two sites (town hall and maintenance garage), Ron Price seconded it and all approved.

- Ryan Willette mentioned Clear Water in Pittsfield, does water testing. He will procure the water testing kits.
- Steve Bennett made a motion to have a select board executive session with the Auditor on Friday at 9 am., Ron Price seconded and all approved.
- Ron Price made motion that Cindy Abbot be appointed as the deputy to the GA director, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.

13. Date of Next Meeting: Monday, March 27, 2023 at 6 pm

14. Adjourn: Ron Price adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.