

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Freedom Board of Selectmen**  
**Date: 7-31-2023**  
*Approved 8-7-2023*

**In attendance:** Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Jim Waterman, Beth Owen-Mishou, Cindy Abbott, Elaine Higgins, Tyler Hadyniak, Laura Greeley, Samantha Turner, Meredith Coffin, Jasmine Willette, Rene Oulet, Joe Freeman, Ron Littlefield, Barbara Littlefield, Joe Sears, Kyle Price (via zoom), Dillon Turner, Jason Moody (via zoon), April Turner (via zoom), Jacob Brugger (via zoom), Craig Turner (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 6:03 pm.
2. Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Ryan Willette made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as amended, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
3. Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
  - o Jim Waterman asked Ryan Willette about the water test. Ryan Willette provided Jim with information about the required filters for the fire department and the town hall.
  - o He thanked Ryan for putting up the signs.
4. Public Works Director Report: Ryan Willette reported
  - o Isiah had a great first week.
  - o Tony ... from Unity reached out about Freedom grading their roads. Our grader is not working right now. Loren Fitch came by and checked out the grader to assess if it is repairable. The blower is not working at this time. The grader repair and the labor needed is about \$2400. If we were to help Unity at \$125 per hour for 40 hours the money earned would cover the cost of repairs. In reviewing the costs it would benefit the town by about \$600. This could be a beneficial relationship in the future.
  - o Barbara Littlefield asked if this would interfere with any of our work that we need done. Ryan Willette responded that this would be the optimum time to do this. Freedom's needs would come first and we would only help other towns if we had the time.
  - o The brakes and door on the garbage truck have been addressed.
  - o A citizen asked if the town insurance would cover the grader if it was in a different town. Ryan Willette said he would look into this. Steve said it is and we do this often.
  - o Steve Bennett made a motion that Ryan be authorized to enter into an agreement with Tony Avila regarding grading in Unity, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
  - o This week

- Cut around the road signs
  - Working on the grader
  - Work on building a workbench and sign racks
  - Out on the Mitchell Road fixing around the ditch by Penny Pond
  - Body swap on the new sterling
  - Fixing the door on the trash truck
  - Inventory/ list of what is needed
- 5. Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
  - Payroll: \$3,716.45 A/P warrant \$22,745.08
  - Ryan Willette made a motion to pay the payroll: \$3,716.45 A/P warrant \$22,745.08, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
  - Ending checkbook balance = \$208,995.80 (march)
  - Camden National Balance \$139,666.11
- 6. Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
- 7. Citizen's Issues and Questions
  - Laura Greeley asked about the auditor. Steve Bennett said he has spoken with him and that it would be this week or next.
  - Property Tax stabilization for 65 or older. Is still in effect for this year. The state will reimburse the town for the difference in the money between what is paid and what would have been charged. The state has enhanced the property tax Fairness Credit (\$1500 credit has been increased to \$2000) State property tax deferral program for seniors 65 and older who cannot afford to pay taxes. Cindy Abbot and Kristi at the town office have information about this.
- 8. Review Correspondence
  - DEP information about road work and bridges. They may be able to guide us to grants as well.
- 9. Town Officials Reports
  - Code Enforcement Officer: Jackie Robbins
    - Jackie has served some paperwork on non-permitted buildings.
  - Health Official:
  - School Board Director: Elenore Hess
  - General Assistance Officer: Ryan Willette
  - Plumbing Inspector
  - Solid Waste Director: Phil Bloomstein
    - Meridith Coffin asked about what was happening with recycling. Steve Bennett responded that he thinks the MRC committee has made a deal with a new buyer. She would like to hear from Phil Bloomstein about what is happening. Elaine Higgins reported that she received an email from MRC and that they are beginning to start up.
  - Animal Control Officer: Peter Nerber
- 10. Town Boards & Committee Reports:
  - Planning Board:
    - Tyler Hadyniak: August 8th meeting with LS Power 6pm. In the church hall basement.

- Recreational Committee:
  - Cleaned up the park on Sunday
    - Painted and scraped the picnic tables
    - Crushed stone around the monuments
    - The rec shed was fixed up. It will need continued repairs. The trees need to be trimmed back.
      - Steve Bennett asked if they had spoken with anyone from the Freedom Academy? Not at this time.
    - Isaiah will pick up the trash on the basketball court.
- Appeals Board:
  - He has asked Tyler Hadyniak to “wordsmith” the document to be brought to the election.
  - Meredith Coffin asked if they had looked at the charter amendment and she asked if it could be brought to the next election.
- Charter Committee
- Historical Society:
- Cemetery Committee
- Budget Committee: we do not have the final audit.
- CDAC Committee: Meeting Wednesday night at ?. They are requesting a joint meeting with the planning board and selectboard members. They have put in a grant application and they would like to review their plans moving forward. First an environmental analysis will be completed. Then they will be accepting plausible ideas of what can be done with the property.
  - Ryan Willette mentioned that there are still cellar holes and a cement slab that could be utilized by Public works. The cellar holes could be filled in.
- Broadband Committee:

## 11. Old Business

- Rene Oulet reported on the task of looking at a drug policy. The committee felt that there were two policies that needed to be written. He has a draft for the Select Board that was created on google drive. He has requested that the Selectmen review the documents and he would like to meet with them to explain how they came to using the language they used. Ryan Willette suggested that the select board members come to the ad hoc committee meeting. He also mentioned the need for an employee handbook.
  - Elaine Higgins suggested that the policies/ job descriptions be signed by the employee and that a copy goes into the individual's personnel file.
- Laura Greeley mentioned that many citizens were concerned about a paid administrative leave. Rene responded that that would be included in the eventual policy.

- Ryan Willette felt that the select board and the committee should meet to review what has been completed. Steve and Ryan will read what has been presented on google docs. Steve would prefer that the ad hoc committee come to the select board meeting. Their next meeting will be Wednesday.
- Joe Freeman asked if there would be wording that would apply to people on their days off. Ryan Willette responded that they would make sure that there would be language to represent that.
- Fisher Property: Have received 3 quotes. Least expensive JM and W out of Winterport. He would take down the house and ship it off and is DEP approve and have a DEP approved waste site. He will stake out the septic system. He will lift out any reusable granite foundation blocks and slope the back bank behind it and drag it into the cellar hole. \$14000. The town has the ability to take down the barn and sell the metal.
  - Steve Bennett made a motion that he be authorized to call JM and W and hire them and confirm the cost, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
  - Laura Greeley asked if Isaiah does this will it affect his work on the road work. Ryan Willette stated that he felt like it would not affect road work getting completed.
  - Ron Littlefield asked why we couldn't tear down the house? Steve Bennett stated that the contractor has to be DEP certified.
- Cindy Abbott and Steve Bennette went to the banks and changed the information on the accounts to reflect Steve Bennett being a signer on the accounts. When at Bangor Savings they determined that there was a second CD worth about \$6000.
  - Steve Bennett made a motion that he be authorized to modify the 2 CD's and Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- On the upcoming ballet, September 19th, could we have a survey on LS Power to assess community members feelings about the power line coming through.
- Laura Greeley mentioned that Tyler and she had taken out applications for Select Board Membership. She was wondering if there could be a candidate's night.

12. New Business

13. Date of Next Meeting: Monday August 7, 2023. 6pm

14. Adjourn: Steve Bennett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40pm, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.