

Meeting Minutes
Freedom Board of Selectmen
Date: 6-5-2023
Approved 6-12-2023

In attendance: Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Ryan Willette, Jim Waterman, Beth Owen-Mishou, Jasmine Willette, Joe Freeman, Elaine Higgins, Nathan McCann, Tyler Hadyaniak (via zoom), Jacob Brugger, April Turner via zoom, Cindy Abbott, Bob Kanzler, Trudy Price, Laura Greeley, Anne-Marie Adamson via zoom, Meredith Coffin (via zoom), Josh Sutor, Raven Carlezon, Peter Nerber, Samantha Whitaker, Rene Ouellet, Kyle Price, Alexis Bennett, Brandon Sutor, Jenny Doyle

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

- Call Meeting to Order / Finalize Agenda: Ron Price called the meeting to order at 5:59 pm.
- Review and Approve Minutes: Secretary's Report: Steve Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and put on file, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Fire Chief & EMA Director Reports: Jim Waterman
 - Thanked Ryan for doing a comprehensive water test.
 - Received a check for \$2484 from the Forest Service as part of a grant for equipment.
 - Jim Waterman is the addressing officer for the town and should be contacted regarding a house number for any houses.
 - Suggested that business meetings could be in the portable classroom, if the number of people attending continues to be high.
- Public Works:
 - Grading is finished up until they start doing the crushed stone base.
 - Sign maintenance was done today and will continue.
 - Cold patching will begin soon.
 - A road mapping program is on the warrant. It provides a mapped layout of the town and the conditions of the road. One-time fee of \$235. Can potentially be able to be linked to the town website.
- Treasurer's Report: Cindy Abbott
 - Payroll Warrant = \$7590.12, A/P warrant = \$6789.37.
 - Checkbook not balanced since March
 - Tan note received for \$100,000 on 5-31-23
 - Received \$35.00
 - KVCOG is having a general assembly meeting
 - Cindy off June 7th and 8th
 - Steve Bennett made a motion that we pay Payroll Warrant = \$7590.12, A/P warrant = \$6789.37, Ryan Willette seconded, all approved.

- Steve Bennett asked about the Camden National Bank account and Cindy reported that the balance was correct in that account. Total amount \$206,101.
- Town Clerk & Tax Collector Report: Cindy Abbott
 - Busy couple of weeks, the lien notices will be out the beginning of next week. 30-day notices for 2023 taxes.
- Citizen's Issues and Questions:
 - Laura Greeley wants to encourage everyone to come out and vote down the school budget. An extremely large budget was voted in. There were no increases in teachers or ed techs. Her concern is catching the students up after their decreased scores following covid. She has requested information regarding where the covid money was spent. She feels we should vote no to support the children. She feels the large budget is not supporting the children.
 - Rene Oulet: He didn't feel that it was their role to write policy as part of the Charter Committee. He feels that keeping the policy book up to date is difficult. He suggested an ad hoc committee to develop draft policies to be presented to the Select Board. He would be willing to serve on a small committee so that the pace of the work could move forward. This committee would make no decisions, just proposals for the select boards review. He has suggested Elaine Higgins and Alexis also be on this committee.
 - Steve Bennett felt that it was a great idea.
 - Steve Bennett made a motion that we appoint an ad hoc committee of Rene Oulet, Elaine Higgins and Alexis Bennett to develop policies to work at the direction of the Select Board, initially working as 3 members, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
 - Meredith Coffin: You mentioned 3 people you would need more. Rene responded that he would like to keep it small. If you want more than 3 she would like to join.
 - Elaine Higgins: She is working to set up an email list for town emails and emergencies. She showed a sample of what information she would collect. She asked for input from the Select Board for their opinion of this idea.
 - Ron Price will consult with MMA to make sure there are no interfering legal aspects to it.
- Review Correspondence
 - Phil Bloomstein will come next week to talk about Broadband and MRC and PERC.
 - Elaine Higgins asked what type of bankruptcy is occurring with PERC.
 - Steve Bennett reported a quote of DM and J in Winterport and got a quote for the Fisher property demolition at \$18,000 including the fill for the cellar hole. We could save money by providing our own fill, \$1000. It would take this vendor 3-5 days. Waste Management was \$28,000

- Brandon Suitor asked if it was ever put out for local bid. Steve Bennett said the company would have to be DEP certified.
 - Steve Bennett reported that we were approved by the town for up to \$20,000 for meeting/enforce 2 state statues, (dilapidated and dangerous buildings/ automobile graveyard and junk yard)
 - Asked if the state working on the bridge will in any way affect that property.
 - Ryan Willette asked if some of the site clean-up could be done by another vendor. It is the shingles that were the concern. The DEP said it cannot be burned due to potential asbestos. Brandon Suitor suggested that the town take down the barn.
 - Steve Bennett will contact the vendor and ask what it would cost for them to just take down the house.
 - Ron Price reported that there is suspected asbestos in the house and that the test for that is at least \$5000. That is why it is important for a DEP vendor to take down the house.
 - Joe Freeman asked how much it would cost to just take down the house. It could be more cost effective for us to take the barn down.
- Town Officials Reports
 - Code Enforcement Officer: Jackie
 - Had a meeting today to review the maps. They will be in good shape when it is time to commit taxes.
 - Emergency Management Officer
 - Waste Management:
 - Health Official
 - Assessors Report
 - The state sent a letter that our sales ratio has gone down below the state requirement, the state looks up all the sales of property over the last year and pick an average and apply that to what we have them assessed at. We are 10% below the required ratio. They were 82% on average on what they should have been. We have to raise everyone's values in town by 12%. We have had 20 new building permits within the last 2 years.
 - Laura Greeley: asked if rather than just add value, how is that the better choice than having the properties correctly assessed.
 - Should Jackie Robbins reevaluate some of the older properties to make sure that the values are accurate.
 - Steve Bennett responded Jackie Robbins' assessments are more than fairly accurate. To do a full evaluation would be very expensive. We have raised the evaluations by 40% across the board.
 - Ron Price reviewed the letter from the state and explained how this is done.
 - Animal Control Officer: Peter Nerber

- Dog bite on Beaver Ridge 5/26/2023 a resident was bit by a dog on the Greely Road. Dog was not licensed and had no proof of rabies. The victim had the rabies vaccine. The dog was quarantined at the owner's residence. He checked on the dog. American bulldog mix. They have told them that the dog cannot be off a leash. Please contact Peter if anyone sees the dog loose. The owner said he has an appointment on Friday to get it vaccinated and will get it licensed the following Monday. Peter Nerbert will check up on this to make sure it happens.
 - Health Committee
 - Planning Board:
 - Recreational Committee:
 - Market: June 17, July 22, August 19 and one in collaboration with the Church in October. These would be 9-2.
 - July 29, parade Field Day
 - August 12 from 10-2 Pond Life Day
 - Appeals Board:
 - Charter Committee: Tyler Hadyniak
 - Vote on the 13th
 - Historical Society
 - Cemetery Committee:
 - Alyssa and Jacob Brugger did all the cemeteries. The Select Board thanked them for their work.
 - Ryan Willette made a motion that Jake and Alyssa Brugger continue to do the cemeteries, Steve Bennett seconded and all approved.
 - Budget Committee:
 - CDAC Committee:
 - Alexis Bennett reported that they will discuss the grant.
 - They have come up with strategies for the Skidgell Lot, July 7th is the grant deadline.
 - School Board: Elenore Hess
- Old Business
 - Water Test results: all the tests passed. There are higher mineral counts than expected and these can be dealt with through filtration. It is drinkable.
 - We passed the lead testing at the post office. Ryan Willette suggested that we do a secondary lead draw. There are spigots that contain lead.
 - Whithum property, there is a request for a building permit.
 - Turner property: Ron Price asked what the status was and they will ask Jackie Robbins for an update.
 - Young property: The transcription for the first hearing is completed and waiting on the second.
- New Business

- Ryan Willette asked to go into executive session for a legal matter 1 MRSA 405 (6) E at 6:45 pm. They came out of executive session at 6:57pm
- Steve Bennett made a motion to increase Ryan Hall pay by one dollar hour per hour due to his increased responsibilities, Ryan Willette seconded and all approved.
- Jason Brugger asked if the job descriptions had been updated. The response was yes.
- Asked if there was an employee handbook. The response was no.
- The auditor was scheduled to be here this week and he changed the date to the 15th of June next week that Steve cannot do, so Ron Price will request that it be rescheduled. This will be an executive session.
 - Tyler Hadyniak asked why this would be in executive session. Ron Price stated that there were personnel issues and that their recommendations were usually between the auditor, the select board and the treasurer.
- Ron Price asked about the leak in the new dam. Steve Bennett reported that the water is coming through the rocks. They will have to wait for low water before they fix the problem.
 - Ron Price reported that someone has looked at it and did not feel it was a big problem at this time.
- Date of Next Meeting: Monday June 12th, 2023 at 6pm
- Adjourn: Ron Price made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8pm. Steve Bennett seconded all approved.