

Town of Freedom Select Board Minutes January 31, 2022

Present: Elaine Higgins, Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Cindy Abbott, Dyann Anderson, Travis Price, Jim Waterman, Joe Freeman, Ellie Hess, Tim Biggs and Amanda Jamison.
Present on Zoom: Eleonor MacMakin and Tyler Hadyniak

Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Motion by Steve: To approve January 24, 2022 minutes and place on file. Elaine 2nd.
Unanimous.

FVFD: Jim Waterman confirmed the town has started paying lease payments on the new truck even though the truck has not been delivered to the fire department. Ron said yes, the town is making lease payments. Jim reported there were no power outages with last snowstorm. One resident called to get plowed out. The washing machine is fixed. No date on delivery of truck yet. EMA Directors meeting will focus on radio tests. Cindy said someone came to get water at Town Office today.

Public Works: Travis Price said he and Ryan made it through the snowstorm. The only repair is for a hydraulic pump on one truck. Travis heard comments from townspeople that roads looked good.

School Board Representative: Ellie Hess reported the Middle School Principal was arrested this past week. Superintendent believes arrest has nothing to do with any RSU#3 students based on reports thus far. On January 5th, Superintendent held a public meeting about updated Covid guidance. Bottom line, if a universal mask mandate is in place, no one needs to quarantine any longer if identified as a close contact. Ellie said some parents are emailing entire school board members. This is problematic in that the school board cannot respond since that would constitute a meeting. There is talk that other schools, not RSU#3, are requesting additional graduation requirements for Waldo County Technical School students. This may make it harder to graduate for some students. Ron said he believes students that go to WCTC should be eligible for all awards such as National Honor Society and other student awards as those that just attend Mt. View High School. Ellie was not sure that they are not eligible. She will look into that. Ellie said Revision Energy approached RSU#3 to buy into a solar farm. RSU#3 is looking into entering a 20-year contract that will reduce energy cost by 15%. Ellie reported Adult Education has experienced low participation. She said they are expanding their offerings to attract more people. Ellie said in 2019 there were 1,200 students attending RSU#3 schools. Currently there are 1,048 students attending RSU#3 schools. State funding is based on how many students enrolled. As of now, state expects Freedom to pay \$446,000 this year versus the \$436,000 last year. Ellie cautioned this is not set in stone until new budget is passed by Board.

Treasurer's Report: Dyann Anderson reported the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$5,436.33 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$56,784.86. The ending checkbook balance is \$377,881.73. Dyann said Joe Kelly from Trio came to help her today. Dyann received quote from Bangor Savings Bank Payroll service. It could start within two weeks of getting paperwork to them.

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Motion by Steve: To accept Bangor Savings Bank quote for Payroll service. Elaine 2nd. Unanimous.

Steve asked about line “Historical Special Revenue”. Dyann said she’d take care of that. Steve reported that Wilson Hess said that town’s annual contribution was voted at some point to stay at \$2,800 and not take cost of insurance out of annual contribution. Ron said the \$500 deduction is to pay electrical and outdoor maintenance bills. Select Board agreed annual contribution should stay at \$2,300.

Motion by Elaine: To accept Treasurer’s report and pay Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$5,436.33 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$56,784.86. Steve 2nd. Unanimous.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Cindy Abbott printed Maine Municipal Association’s (MMA) training schedule. Cindy said Edwin Ingraham Jr. built building without getting building permit, plumbing permit and Jackie never had the chance to inspect plumbing. This property is being sold and closing this week. Jackie plans to add \$565 worth of fees for not following through with permits.

Motion by Steve: To put this on hold until the Select Board can talk with Jackie. Elaine 2nd. Unanimous.

Cindy said today was last day to license dog without \$25 late fee. Cindy said about 20 – 25 dogs not licensed at this point. Town reports from committees due by February 7th.

Motion by Ron: Picture we want on town report is plow and town garage behind. Elaine 2nd. Unanimous.

Cindy asked Post Office to hold Town’s mail on Fridays and Saturdays and deliver mail Mondays – Thursdays.

Motion by Ron: To go into Executive Session for Personnel Matter 1 MRSA 405 (6) A at 7:35pm.

Resumed regular meeting at 7:58pm.

Motion by Ron: To grant pay raises to all employees that were due one on February 1st. Elaine 2nd. Unanimous.

Citizen’s Issues: Eleonor MacMakin wanted an update about trailer on High Street. Ron said he contacted the town attorney, Bill Kelly about it, has not heard back. The road is a State road. Ron did speak with the family whose property the trailer sits on. Ron apologized to Select Board that trailer is still sitting there. Now that there is substantial snow on the ground, Ron suggested waiting until April. If trailer still there in April, Select Board take action. In the meantime, Ron will call MMA also for an opinion.

Correspondence:

Northeast Paving: Ron will check into this letter about a credit application update.

Town Boards and Committees:

Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC): Next meeting Wednesday, February 2, 2022

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Recreation Committee: Cindy said there is an ongoing fundraiser with Rada Cutlery to support committee. Also working with Community Historical Society to plan Winterfest.

Budget Committee: Steve said there are no more meetings scheduled.

Appeals Board: Board will have meeting right after Town Meeting to elect officers.

Southwestern Waldo County Broadband Coalition: Elaine said they are waiting on feasibility study, should be finished by the end of February.

Old Business: none

New Business: none

Motion to adjourn at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted, Amanda Jamison