

Town of Freedom Select Board Minutes February 7, 2022

Present: Elaine Higgins, Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Cindy Abbott, Dyann Anderson, Travis Price, Jim Waterman, Lissa Widoff, Prentice Grassi, Colleen Hanlon-Smith, and Amanda Jamison.
Present on Zoom: Tyler Hadyniak

Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

Motion by Steve: To approve January 31, 2022 minutes and place on file. Elaine 2nd. Unanimous.

FVFD: Jim Waterman brought up the reports about some land in Freedom and surrounding towns having been spread with municipal sludge in the past and the presence of PFAS (forever chemicals) as a result of this spreading. He wondered if something should be put in Town Report making people aware of this. Steve suggested instead something could be put on the town website and/or a letter sent to townspeople. No decision was made. Jim said inline water filter was installed for washing machine.

Public Works: Travis Price said he and Ryan are working on fixing the broken alternator on Ryan's truck he uses for plowing.

Treasurer's Report: Dyann Anderson reported the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$11,369.90 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$11,196.60. The ending checkbook balance is \$394,036.37.

Motion by Elaine: To accept Treasurer's report and pay Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$11,369.90 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$11,196.60. Steve 2nd. Unanimous.

Town Boards and Committees:

Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC): Lissa Widoff explained history of committee, having been formed some years ago to oversee cleanup of the Skidgel site. Reformed in May 2021 to figure out best use of the site recognizing Public Works needs, potential other business uses, recreational uses and wetlands. Committee has survey complete and ready to put on town website and paper copies at town office to solicit feedback from community members about their thoughts about the Skidgel/Cannery Lot. Simultaneously as this plan got underway, infrastructure money became available and a local food distribution company, Daybreak Growers Alliance, learned that federal funds available to build food processing/distribution centers. Daybreak Growers Alliance, principals, Colleen Hanlon-Smith, Freedom resident and Adriene Lee learned of Skidgel/Cannery Lot and town looking for possible uses of site. Daybreak Growers has opportunity to apply for federal funding to build a building but application due February 20th. Lissa recognized committee has not fully realized their process they envisioned to gather input about the site, while recognizing there is this once in a lifetime opportunity for these federal funds that Daybreak Growers Alliance could apply for. Prentice Grassi said CDAC was not unanimous in support of hastening application process for Daybreak Growers while not having finished gathering data from community members. However, the CDAC vote to give Daybreak Growers a chance to apply for funding did move forward while also gathering input from community members through the survey. Therefore, the committee recommends the town and Daybreak Growers Alliance sign an intent to lease with contingencies for both entities, so that either side could back out of agreement at any time. Colleen said the Skidgel/Cannery Lot is not the only land the group is looking at. Colleen also said she only wants this to move forward if it is a positive for the town and Daybreak Growers. Concerns expressed were: Elaine wondered about traffic; Ron wants there

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to be room at site for Public Works to store vehicles under cover and potential use of existing slab for storm debris, piling fill, sand, etc..., wants Public Works to be able to do business with flexibility. Elaine asked if Colleen is looking for financial contribution from Town. Colleen said no financial contribution from town is needed, unless there is a shared interest on the site that would need improvement. Daybreak Growers building needs are a 5,000 square foot space, water, septic that would all be funded by Daybreak Growers with an intent to lease, 5 – 10 years with option to renew with no specific spot on the Skidgel/Cannery lot chosen. Prentice clarified that land would be owned by the town and the building would be owned by Daybreak Growers Alliance. This intent to lease just gives Daybreak Growers the ability to apply for federal funds. This is an in between step, Lissa said, and with contingencies added to intent to lease, gives flexibility for both parties to end agreement if so desired.

Motion by Steve: To ask Bill Kelly, Town Attorney, to draft an intent to lease agreement including list of contingencies. Elaine 2nd.

Discussion: Steve will call Bill Kelly tomorrow and ask for a draft to be sent by email and share with CDAC to communicate about all specifics needing to be included in intent to lease agreement.

Vote: Unanimous.

Recreation Committee: Cindy said the Rada Cutlery fundraiser raised \$43.16. Select Board approved the Rec Committee use of credit card to purchase items for Winterfest with list Cindy will provide next Monday.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Cindy Abbott said she received request from citizen to sell product for a school fundraiser at the Town Office. Select Board consensus was that person could hang a flyer in Town Office about the fundraiser. Cindy showed press release for upcoming election of School Board members at large. All residents within school district can elect school board members for all towns. Cindy said mailing will go out in next few days.

Citizen's Issues: none

Correspondence:

National Association of State Agencies for Surplus Property – Cindy will check to see if Freedom ever belonged to this.

Old Business: Ron called the state about the trailer next to road on High Street. Since this is a state road, the Maine Department of Transportation will act.

New Business: Ron will get water test kits for town properties with running water and include a PFAS water test for Skidgel Lot.

Motion to adjourn at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted, Amanda Jamison