

**APPROVED MINUTES/FREEDOM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
January 26, 2015 REGULAR MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER: 6:15 PM

PRESENT: Selectmen Ron Price (Chair) and Ken Overlock. Clint Spaulding was not here. Also in attendance was Erna Keller (treasurer and secretary), Heather Perry (Superintendent), David Schofield (CEO & LPI), Scott Holmes (ACO), Jim Waterman (Fire Chief), Cindy Abbott (Clerk), Myrick Cross (School Board Rep & Historical), Robert Couturier (Pleasant Hill Cemetery President), Glen & David Bridges, Tim Biggs, Steve Bennett, Brian Jones, Pam and Bob Herman

REVIEW MINUTES: Minutes from January 19th 2015 were reviewed. Ken/Ron, made motions, to accept as written and place on file; motions passed.

Speaker's requested to be on Agenda:

Superintendent Perry stopped by to talk about school and that she is always available so just email or call. We are almost half way thru the school year and things are going well, they have hired new staff throughout the district and the new programs (esp. in the elementary) are doing very good. School recently got an extension to 2010 on requirements for graduation. This will affect the 7th grade class.

I would like to THANK the town for the Great work done by their Road Crews. They have done such a good job keeping the roads clear and available for the buses to get to our students. Thank You Again...

Governor's Budget is flat funding- There are a lot of moving parts and we won't know for sure until April how this will affect the budget. As it stands right now without the governor's budget, our budget has an increase from 8.1 mils to 8.4 mils.

APRIL 6th 2015 @ 6:00 pm is the budget preview for town officials and is open to the public

Ron asked "Are you going to be here?"

Heather Perry replied "Feb 11th she will know for sure about whether she gets her new job. If she does she will finish the school year and will start there July 1st."

Tim Biggs asked "Is there a problem with the heating system? There has been talk about some issues."

Heather Perry replied "When that new system was put in it was a lot more involved than what we was use to. We have put a lot of time into learning and getting use to using this system. We now have the system working correctly and this is where the comments have come from."

Brain Jones said "So as far as our taxes because of the mil, you are saying our taxes will rise 1/3 mil to fund the school budget."

Heather Perry replied "yes, you are correct."

Heather thanked the selectmen for letting her come speak and said once again "my door is always open please contact me with any comments or concerns."

Ron opened the floor to Robert Couturier Pleasant Hill Cemetery, President and thanked him for coming.

Robert Couturier stated "Pleasant Hill Cemetery is the only cemetery in Freedom that has spaces

available for burials. Last year we had 4 cremations (\$1200) and 3 conventional burials (\$1800) This year we haven't sold any as of yet and the price of a burial has increased to \$500.00 for plot. There are also additional burial fee costs such as - cremations \$150 and conventional burial \$200.00

When there is a burial the law states that 30% has to go to perpetual care.

There are 696 sites still open for burials with 519 of the vacant to sell.

There is an Annual News letter that gets sent out to around 250 people (ancestors or people with plots all ready) as a fund raiser. Last year this brought in around \$2835 for operating expenses.

Kim and Steve Holmes set in motion a Spaghetti Supper to raise money. (\$459 from receipts, donations for sign \$185 and silent auction \$274)

Sign - Last year we put up a new sign the cost was \$2231. This was a great investment and will last for a long time. If you base this on a 30 year investment the cost is \$71 per year.

Trees- We removed a few trees that was planted in 1891 thanks to Erna giving us Pat Cronin's name @ Maine DOT in Knox. Over the next 7 years we will take down 1-2 per year. We have planted new Sugar Maple Trees (cost \$3407.64, plus digging holes \$350 and expenses \$108.22) in between the old trees. We applied for a grant from the State for 1/2 the amount of trees (\$2800) and have rec'd \$1800 from Memorializing a tree in someone's honor.

Mowing- We want to Thank the town for their \$1200 donation to help out with the Veteran's graves. We had cemetery mowed 11 times this year. After first bidder (lowest) couldn't fulfill his requirements, we hired Marcus Lowe. He did an awesome job this year and we are hoping to get him back next year. After he realized the extent of the work it probably won't be at the same bid.

Work to be done- There is a lot we are hoping to accomplish this year, such as bushes on left side to be removed, reset corner markers, graves to be filled in, chain driveway for less destruction during mud season, looking into green burials and trees in the back still need to be cut down or trimmed.

Tour the Cemetery- We have been working with the Historical and would like to set up some tours of our Veteran's grave and talk about their history-stories.

Ron asked if they have made a request this year from the town.

Mr. Couturier replied "yes, the amount of \$1200 same as last year." That was a great amount of support from the town and he was hoping to have the support again.

Myrick Cross said "Bob has done an amazing job with initiating meeting and working closely with the board members. Beverly is our treasurer and has done amazing job.

Mr. Couturier "As you all know there is no interest having our money in Cds and Beverly has been checking out other option. Like the town we are considered nonprofit and have to use guaranteed items. Our broker has talked about municipal bonds."

Ken asked "Has all the trees been planted?"

Mr. Couturier replied "Yes, it looks like they all have survived but if we have any that doesn't Sprague's will replace them at no cost to us."

Ken asked "So will the state remove trees every year?"

Mr. Couturier replied "Thanks to Erna contacting Pat Cronin we are expecting up to 2 a year. We just hope that if Pat gets done for any reason that the state still will continue with the removal.

We had prices from \$600-\$800 for removal of one tree. This is a lot of savings to the cemetery.

Glen Bridges commented "Bob we just would like you to know that when you come to town the first thing you see if the beautiful cemetery, trees, sign and it looks terrific. Great job with the mowing this year."

TREASURER:

Erna reported:

Payroll Warrant..... \$2,769.12
A/P Warrant for Startup-Bank...\$100.00
A/P Warrant..... \$5,647.93
Ending checkbook balance.....\$508,769.51

1. Payroll Warrant this week is \$2,769.12 (clerk, treasurer, secretary, cleaning ladies, and road crew- 23.5 hrs OT)
2. AP Warrant for Start Up @ The Bank of Maine was \$100.00
3. A/P this week is \$5,647.93 (Maritime Energy, Sullivan's, CMP, Yankee, BMV, Fairpoint, Fire Tech, MPBN, Travis, Jason Marks, Cox Machine, Staples, Central Tire, MGMC Workplace Health)
4. Ending Checkbook balance.....\$508,769.51
5. HISTORICAL still hasn't paid yet for the foreclosed property they are purchasing. After talking with Myrick Cross he said that the lawyer is checking into the deeds and will be getting a check to us soon. I explained that we need to have the money paid to Cindy ASAP because the auditor asked why it still hasn't been paid. This should be paid in full since they are doing work on this property and receiving grants and donations
6. Audit is being finished by Vernice, she was here Friday and did all her checking of warrants, cash rec. etc...
7. Rec'd check from WS Darley for FVFD-Refund \$134.85
8. Tingley Property so far the amount to recover
 - a. Taxes \$13,688.53
 - b. Surveying \$9,500.00
 - c. Lawyer \$94.25Total \$23,262.78
9. What fun I have had with new bank and scanner-she will be back on Friday to see if we can get it up and running, so far it has not been an easy transaction.

Ron asked "Have we rec'd our check stock from the yet?"

Erna stated "No we haven't yet, so we are still running off Key Bank Checking but not making deposits there and we have only deposited the \$100 in bank of Maine."

Ron said "So are you driving to Bank of Maine to make deposits?"

Erna stated "No, we have today's deposit in the safe, we will be closed tomorrow and maybe Wednesday plus she will be here on Friday so I will make deposit then."

Ken/Ron moved to accept and sign the payroll; motion passed.

Ken/Ron moved to sign the A/P warrant; motion passed.

CITIZEN'S ISSUES:

Brian Jones presented an ordinance he would like to see on Town Meeting Warrant to see if Freedom was interested in accepting.

Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance of 2015

This would give the people of Freedom the right to produce, process, sell, purchase or consume local foods from others. Face to face transaction. It would be like a neighbor who has made a lot of jelly wanting to see the extra to friends or others.

Brian said "I can sell a chain saw, wood, car, items on the web without anyone questioning, but am not allowed to sell jams, jellies, eggs, meat, etc. to someone without rules and regulations. All this does is say that the town backs its residents and they have rights to sell their products." Discussion on the state law is 90 days that this should have been introduced to selectmen for a warrant article... Ron asked Cindy to check on Wednesday with MMA about putting article on Selectmen's Warrant and a hearing 7 days prior.

Steve Bennett- Future RSU3

Steve told about the Alumni Game and its huge success. It was a great family event that raised about \$3000 there was a lot of people there and great silent auction items. The girls and boys basketball players from the past our former cheerleaders were there too. Steve said he thinks everyone had a great time.

Erna said "I know I did, it was great to see all the kids...adults... come back and play. Future did a great job and it was fun for all involved. Lynn Hadyniak has posted some wonderful pictures on face book too. "

Multi Purpose Building is the next project of Future RSU3. This will be 36' x 40' in the middle of all the sports fields equipped with a concession, first aid room, and restrooms. Estimate is \$100,000 to drill a well and build. Once done this will be donated back to the school. We have \$25,000 earmarked already for this project with 2 donations. (Glenn Couturier will donate the foundation work and we have an electrician who will donate the electrical)

"The Stable" will be the name on the building with "Where the Mustangs Go to Eat" Building will look like a barn with a Mustang Weathervane on the roof.

Golf Tournament raised \$5000-\$6000 profit

Steve said "We have 22 Members right at this point"

Steve Bennett- Personal Property Issue

Steve asked if there has been anymore discussion on this matter

Ron said "The selectmen haven't come up with a plan of action yet, still are doing research on how to present to the town."

Steve asked "Concerns?"

Ron stated "Article in a warrant is one avenue"

"Informational meeting then let assessor just stop assessing if the town decides to go that way."

Ken stated "Other option is to go after everything and do it correctly. It hasn't been done this way in the past and would take a lot of time and effort"

Steve said "Personal Property assessment is \$7400 uncollected is \$6000

Ken stated "All together it adds up to around \$14000 you have excise on tractors too. If you stop collecting personal property then you have people second guessing on whether to excise. They don't have to excise unless they drive on the road from field to field."

Cindy stated "They could choose to haul by trailer instead of excising.

Ron-"around \$2800"

Steve said "Well town isn't doing correctly."

Ron answered "I don't know if any town does it correctly, every town is different and tries to be as fair as possible."

Steve said "There is a \$1000 exemption, if your property is under this then you don't get charged personal property."

Glen Bridges "TV's are also exempt- there is a list of exemptions to follow."

Ron will call MMA and town lawyer to see how selectmen should follow up with personal property.

David Bridges-Running for Selectmen

I would like to answer the questions about if I get selectmen am I not going to be available because we travel.

Answer is "Any traveling that we do would be modified if I get selectmen position. Even when we go to Florida I would be on speaker phone or Skype so that I am available for meetings and decisions that need to be made. I have done town business before when I was on vacation. "

Ken Overlock-Vacation

Ken wants everyone to know that he will be gone from
June 23rd 2015 to July 6th 2015

TOWN CLERK:

Cindy reported:

1. Nomination papers were due back on Tuesday Jan 20th 2015. The following will be on the ballot.

Selectmen-3 year term Stephen Bennett and Dave Bridges
Clerk, Tax Collector, Excise Tax Collector-Cynthia Abbott
Treasurer-Ernestine Keller

School Board Rep-3 year term- Myrick Cross

Absentee Ballots available February 11th 2015

2. Town Meeting Warrant must be completed by February 28th 2015 (last selectmen meeting before warrant needs to be posted)

3. Town Reports from Board Members/Officers-Would like to have these in the office by Friday Feb 13th 2015

4. Spirit of America Tribute

Honoring Old Mill

Ron will write and Ken will help

5. Next selectmen meeting we will have cover colors and possible designs for cover

Ken stated he would like to go back to the small town reports- no color

FIRE DEPT:

Jim asked if water Test was back

Ron stated it is not yet.

Jim wanted selectmen to know that there was a fire on Crosby Brook Rd that they responded to. While there the Thorndike Fire Dept backed into our truck. There was some damage and we have a door that can't be opened above the bumper. This will be looked at next week and I have already talked with Debbie @ MMA. The conditions were very icy and they had to call in sand

trucks.

Ron asked Jim if he rec'd copy of Knox contract

Jim said No

Ron went and got copy of Knox Contract from office. He read and the dates have been corrected.

April 1st 2015 to March 31st 2018

Ron/Ken motion for selectmen and fire chief to sign

Jim stated that there is an increase over next three years.

Erna said we should make a copy to keep in our records and then mail.

Cindy is on way to post office and will mail out for the selectmen.

Jim asked if the EMA officer would have an Emergency Shelter set up at the office

Ron said "He hasn't heard of one being set up"

GENERAL ASSISTANCE:

Cindy requested an Executive session 7:27 pm

Ron/Ken motion to go into executive session due to a legal matter 1 MRSA 405 (6) E

Returned @ 7:40 pm

No decisions made

ROAD COMMISSIONERS:

Unauthorized Access to town garage. Within the last 24 hours it appears someone with a key has gone into the garage and gone through items-removing a page from one of the truck logs. Need to check and see who has key access to garage and check to see why this was done. Nobody should be removing any logs from any truck there.

SAND/SALT

Depending on the storm coming tomorrow and Friday the Town might need to get more salt/sand for remainder of the winter months.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

2 this week GA & ACO

ASSESSOR'S:

CEO/LPI:

Need to adopt a New Flood Plain Ordinance & Upgraded Maps by the federal government

The new ordinance doesn't have any majors changes

Will be ready in July

Dave has a copy, change in elevations

If Town votes against new ordinance then residents can't get flood insurance.

Ron asked Dave to get selectmen a copy for office

Ron asked "Does the new ordinance fit our map?"

Dave "Yes"

Ron said "So we need to discontinue the old ordinance if we decide to accept the new one"

Dave "Yes and the new map. There is also someone @ the EMA's office that can put our map (6 pcs) into one map"

To add Warrant to Town Meeting

Need to have a hearing
Ordinance is 19 pages-should list it's available @ Town Office
Dave can get a copy and send Cindy it to have available at Office
Need to post 7 days prior-post in 3 places & put in paper
Erna said "Can have Frances Walker also add to Town Website for people to access"
Ken asked "Is this Ordinance customized to Town of Freedom?"
Dave said "Yes, original was done in the 70's and then updated a few years ago."

Grants Available Low Income for New Trailers
The state has a new program coming available for low income residents
Dave will call the lady back to get the information to have at next meeting
Septic Systems Grants
The town pays up front for all the costs and then the state reimburses the town (sometimes it takes up to 9 months)
Town responsible for septic if condemned. Hard long process
Ron asked Dave to take care of Greeley Road septic issue
PUBLIC WORKS:

HISTORICAL:
Myrick Cross wants to remind everyone about Meeting for the Keene Building Thursday night here in the election hall. Going to have great speakers and is an informational meeting. **WOULD LIKE TO INVITE EVERYONE TO ATTEND!!**

SCHOOL BOARD REP:
There will be a workshop at the end of next week to start a search for a new superintendent.
Option is using an interim as a last resort.
Valuation Committee- the state and the union are very involved with decisions

ACO:
Scott requested an Executive session 7:40 pm
Ron/Ken motion to go into executive session due to a legal matter 1 MRSA 405 (6) E
Returned @ 7:45 pm
No decisions made

DAMN COMMITTEE:
Tim Biggs and Dave Bridges showed the first draft sketches for the overflow & spillway.
Concrete footings, cement back, rip rapping Waiting for Al to get some prices
Tim said FEMA is getting a price for rip rapping
Some repairs that need to be done are
Gravel in front of the damn there are 3 holes
Need to increase 4 inches above -need to scoop out
Tony state dam guy said that it needs to be scooped out
Tim has talked to Clayton Larrabee but hasn't gotten a price yet
Still have 2 final drawings. These will eat up the \$10,000 that was donated by Beaver Ridge
Can't put dirt on either side of damn because of silk
Ken asked can we enlarge the concrete and would it be cheaper

Tim said that's an option

Right now cost could be up to \$35,000

Dave said one we get the actual figures we can go from there

Tim- 7ft wall from footing and the lip for an Emergency spillway

Steve-what do you do to divert the water?

Tim-Low water time of the year

Glen- Tom from Beaver Ridge said might be interested in helping out again

CEMETERY COMMITTEE:

Ron mentioned Cindy would like to add money to budget so that we can hire someone to mow the old cemeteries. She will still volunteer but isn't willing to be there every weekend like her and Erna did last year

RECREATION COMMITTEE:

Erna reported that we are working on a proposal to just use the money rolled over for expenses instead of raising and appropriating. Cindy and she talked to Vernice about what rec has for money and it should cover cost this year. Also the 9500 that also could be used if needed doesn't have to go in front of town because it's special revenue.

Budget Committee:

Tuesday night meeting cancelled due to storm

OLD BUSINESS:

Ken still hasn't heard back from Bill Pickford yet on Tingley Property

NEW BUSINESS:

Need to start working on the warrants for town meeting and get our reports done

Ken/Ron motion to adjourn meeting 8:20 pm

Next AP/Warrant signing meeting will be February 2nd 2015 @ 6:00 pm

Next Regular meeting will be February 9th 2015 @ 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Ernestine Keller,
Secretary