

## Town of Freedom Select Board Minutes March 14, 2022

**Present:** Elaine Higgins, Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Travis Price, Cindy Abbott, Dyann Anderson, Jim Waterman, Joe Freeman, and Amanda Jamison.  
Present on Zoom: Tyler Hadyniak

Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

### Minutes:

Steve wanted to make sure minutes from March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting reflect his extreme displeasure with the Trio computer program. He felt that the program is failing the Town. Discussion about recent \$1800 bill from Trio for coming to the office to help Dyann. Person from Trio could not provide answers while in the office, so took questions back with them. Dyann has not heard back any answers to questions she had. Elaine suggested to send Brenda an email that the Town received the bill, but that the Town has not had any of their questions answered. Auditor in the past has said they would not provide an audit if Quickbooks was used. Need to find out what computer programs auditor will audit. Elaine suggested that Steve find another computer program the Town could use.

**Motion** by Ron: To accept March 7, 2022 minutes as amended place on file. Elaine 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous.

**Motion** by Steve: To accept Saturday, March 12, 2022 Town Meeting minutes as amended and preserve minutes with Town Report as Cindy would see fit. Ron 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous.

**Motion** by Elaine: To nominate Ron Price to be Chairman of the Select Board. Steve 2<sup>nd</sup>. 2 in favor, 1 abstention

**FVFD:** Jim Waterman congratulated Select Board and said he was totally caught by surprise with the Spirit of America award. Jim thanked the Select Board. Jim said new firetruck from Sawkill Fire Department in New York was delivered on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. The truck is in service. Radio was programmed by County EMA for no charge. Jim said the truck is above and beyond anything they hoped would come. Everyone is very happy with it. He added that the truck has already been used on a call. Steve asked questions for renewal of Property and Casualty insurance. Jim said if he were to replace truck it would be a couple hundred thousand dollars. Steve said that he will call MMA to insure it for agreed value of \$200,000. Ron said since the truck is already in service, want to make sure the agreed value is on insurance ASAP. Steve said he would call MMA Insurance tomorrow. Jim said the 1981 truck is no longer in service. Jim suggested to put the old truck out for bid when it is ready. It is an antique truck. Jim suggested \$7,000 - \$8,000. Ron let Jim know the Town Office water test for PFAS passed. Jim would like to hang up test results in firehouse.

**Public Works:** Travis Price received note from Wendell Nicklas about wash out along road in Unity by new garage. Travis noted that Wendell did a building permit for garage but there is no application for a culvert which should have been done with building permit application. The wash out is also being reported in Unity. Ron suggested that Jackie go visit Wendell and get a culvert application filled out. Travis has found two large cabinets at Fastenal with hundreds of drawers full of inventory that the garage could use. Each one is \$500.

**Motion** by Elaine: To authorize Travis to buy two cabinets for \$1,000 and have money come out of winter roads. Steve 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous.

Travis has been shopping for a hood for Truck #7 to be able to access engine better and work on it when plow gear is on the truck.

**Motion** by Steve: To purchase hood for Truck #7 for \$500 and have money come out of Truck #7 line. Elaine 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous.

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**Citizen's Issues:** Tyler Hadyniak said the first meeting of the Town Charter Committee will be Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in the Election Hall/Annex. Cindy said that three members need to be sworn in prior to attending that meeting. They could come into the office right before meeting and Cindy will swear them in. Steve asked how the Chairman is chosen, assuming it is a very specific guideline outlined in Statute. Tyler said he couldn't remember exactly but would know process for first meeting.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dyann Anderson reported the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$6,438.35 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$10,051.53. The ending checkbook balance is \$362,030.57.

**Motion** by Elaine: To pay Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$6,438.35 and the A/P Warrant in the amount of \$10,051.53. Steve 2<sup>nd</sup>, Unanimous.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Cindy Abbott had reports for Select Board: cash receipts and excise report for January 2022 to date, 2019 taxes unpaid, 2020 taxes unpaid totaling \$40,958.92, 2021 taxes unpaid totaling \$121,000. Steve noted that is less than 10% of taxes committed. Cindy said Town Office will be closed Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> all day because she will be attending a cyber security training. Steve said he has talked with Cindy about the Cyber Security Policy renewal. There are a lot of new things this year that the Town needs to be aware of and doing. Steve will request from MMA a model Cyber Security Policy. Ron said that Belfast Computers provides cyber security for Town and Ron will call them to talk with him to make sure Town has adequate protection. Cindy said Town Office will be open half day from 9am – noon on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> because Cindy will attend a motor vehicle training.

**Computer Issues:** Steve said he spoke with Dan Corvette. Dan has done computer repair, worked with the Town of Knox and worked with the computer program, Trio for over 25 years. Steve spoke with him about issues the Town is having with Trio. Dan said he'd go through entire computer system and then give a report on what he found. Dan did mention that since server is on a computer that is used by employees, sometimes mistakes can be entered but if entered on computer with server, then it effects the entire program. Dan said often that servers are on a separate computer. Elaine asked if problems are found, who fixes them? Steve said that Dan explained that he will be able to see how Trio is set up, but he wouldn't go into the Town's Trio program.

**Motion** by Steve: To call Dan Corvette and get him in communication with Cindy. Elaine 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Discussion:** Ron said that the Town has Trio and they are supposed to be helping us. Cindy wondered if Dan would find the issues in the background of why Dyann has had so many issues this past year? Cindy suggested Ron be here and could ask questions of Dan. Ron is wondering if this is a Trio problem or a computer problem.

**Vote:** Unanimous

### **Correspondence:**

Veteran's Law Class – Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm – 8:30pm, Tyler Hadyniak will give a class for an introductory guide to veteran's benefits law. There is no charge to attend but registration is required through RSU#3 Adult & Community Education, 568-3426.

Municipal Review Committee (MRC) – Ron is going to call Mike Carrol about this information about sale of Fiberight facility.

Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) – Information about Village Partnership Initiative, \$5 million of matching funds to large and small transformative projects for downtowns.

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### Town Boards and Committees:

**Recreation Committee:** Cindy said there will be a drive-up Bunny Hop on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be raffle drawings. Cindy said that Amanda Jamison has offered to the Town, The Mill School's wooden play structure. Elaine said she'd like to look at it. Amanda will get in touch with Elaine, Alyssa and Cindy to look at it.

### Old Business:

Ron said Jackie Robbins will be at office on Wednesday and can ask her about setbacks for a porta potty at the boat landing and then decide on renting one for the season.

Skidgel Survey – Ron said Town needs to decide what to do about line between Freedom General and Town owned land. Steve spoke with Bill Kelly. Bill suggested to go with the survey's best opinion, record on survey that this is the best opinion and have surveyor set pins. Ron will communicate this with surveyor.

Steve spoke with Jackie Robbins, CEO, about money approved at Town Meeting to be able to utilize the State Statute on Dangerous Buildings. From Bill Kelly's recommendations, Steve said first step is for Board to take a vote on which building to start with. Then to have Jackie inspect building, take a lot of photos, and write a letter about findings on why the building needs to be dealt with. Jackie's letter will be sent to Bill Kelly to look at. After that, the letter can be sent to property owner. Steve suggested to start with the building that is most obviously deteriorated in town, and no one lives in it. Ron has spoken with the owner of this building several times about possible ways to get building torn down. Steve thinks that the value of lot would be more than cost of cleaning it up. If property owner cleans it up, great. If not Town puts lien on it for 18 months and pays to clean it up. Property owner has 18 months to pay the Town back expenses incurred for cleaning up site. Joe Freeman asked if it is a buildable lot? Select Board said since there is a house there, it is a grandfathered lot.

**Motion** by Steve: To contact Jackie Robbins and get her set up to do an inspection of 67 Belfast Road, owned by Chris and Marissa Fisher. Unanimous.

**New Business:** Citizen asked to use Town Office for a gathering. Select Board said they do not let anyone use it for personal gatherings and suggested the Grange.

Elaine brought up Trevor Ripley's suggestion of adding a dock to boat launch. Elaine said she would like to work with Trevor to look for grants to pay for a dock. Elaine spoke with someone from the Department of Inland Fisheries for more information about Sandy Pond. Cindy said Recreation Committee would be willing to put in a 2<sup>nd</sup> dock but Select Board did not want a dock by boat landing, because they did not want anyone to swim near boat landing. Ron said he does not see a reason to have a dock at the boat landing. Elaine explained that people launch their boat and want a place to tie it up while they go to park vehicle and trailer.

Steve brought up the need to send abutters that live beyond signs on Davis Road and Rollins Road that the signs need to come down.

**Motion** by Steve: To send every abutter a letter who live beyond signs on Davis and Rollins Road that the signs need to come down. The signs are in violation of State Law. Ron 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Discussion: Ron asked if people on Beaver Hill Road would get sent a letter too? Steve said the sign on Beaver Hill Road is at the portion of the road that is abandoned. An abandoned road is when a town does not take any action on a road including maintenance and then it qualifies as an abandoned

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road. Steve continued that in the new State road statute there is an easy way to deal with abandoned roads, that Select Boards can do it now. Steve asked if Town should include sending the letter to landowners that use Davis and Rollins Road to access their properties but don't necessarily have land fronting the roads. Select Board agreed they probably should include those landowners.

Vote: 2 in favor, 1 abstention

Select Board said they will have a Work Session on Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm about Select Board policies.

**Motion** to adjourn at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted, Amanda Jamison