

Town of Freedom Select Board Minutes
August 29, 2022

Present: Elaine Higgins, Ron Price, Steve Bennett, Travis Price, Jim Waterman, Eleanor MacMakin and Steve Holmes.

Present on zoom: Tyler Hydiniak.

Ron Price called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Motion by Elaine, 2nd Ron, unanimous: To accept August 22, 2022 minutes as presented and placed on file. Eleanor will make some edits from Steve before filing.

FVFD: Jim Waterman announced an EOC exercise October 25, 2022 at 6:00 pm and is looking for volunteers. Steve said he is interested. Jim needs a letter signed by the Select Board for this exercise. There is an anticipated expense to repair the power unit of a JAWS device that Jim will pay from the Capital reserve budget. Knox Fire Protection paid \$3,120. \$2,475 from 2 BBQ's was deposited to the FVFD checking account.

Motion by Steve, 2nd Elaine, unanimous: Spend \$3,086 from Capital reserve for equipment repair.

Jim reported there will be a Parade in Thorndike September 17, 2022 starting at 9:00 am. The Common Ground fair in Unity runs from September 23, 24 and 25. Jim will set up a toll booth one of these days.

Public Works: Travis reported a change to his paystub but his email service has been fixed. He asked the board to see what might have changed with the Trio and Belfast computer.

Travis requested that the Labor Law Poster be printed and Ron agreed.

He discussed the letters sent from Jackie Robbins to Dalton Heppard and Brandon Suitor that have been issued from the Town Lawyer. There is a 30 day wait before further action can be taken.

Travis requested the website page for public works be updated with instructions about the process to obtain a Driveway Permit.. He will be involved with the permit process and needs a procedure outlined for the customer and posted on the Public Works page. Steve Bennett agreed and will write the text once Travis will send a text or email to Steve on how he wants the message to read. Travis also voiced concern that the policies posted on the website do not have the current year signatures of all Select persons. The board agreed that these tasks will get on the agenda.

Travis further outlined the challenges he faces when properties change hands where an existing driveway is changed or altered without a permit. He further stressed the need for a clear policy that is posted in plain language on the Town website.

Travis is repairing the new used grader and requested that a budget item be added for the Grader maintenance. He also reported that the Town website did not have information about the personnel policies for sick time and vacation time, suggesting this be considered.

Elaine requested he change the image on the speed alert entering the Town to a Smiley face, and Travis agreed.

Travis reported on the status of the New Used Grader and he will change tires to tubes and remove the O rings. A used rim for the grader is \$500.

Travis was faced with some concerned citizens on Clark Rd. where he had cleared the setbacks. He heard from different neighbors and was subjected to verbal hostility. He explained that it is the custom to leave tree limbs for citizens to claim for firewood or other uses. Steve said the cut wood belongs to the property owner.

Elaine reported that she also spoke to concerned citizens on Davis Rd. about the new broadband non-profit corporation that has been voted into effect by all the participating towns. They heard a rumor that the town would charge a fee of \$200 if they elected to not take the service. Elaine explained that participation is completely voluntary and there are no penalties for not taking the service.

Cemetery Committee report: Steve Holmes is working to restore a stone for the Gliden- Abbott cemetery , and Steve Holmes is in touch with the VA about markers provided for veterans of all wars . Another stone for a potential revolutionary war veteran, Levi Temple in the Beaver Hill Cemetery needs a VA headstone as well. The stones are granite and weigh 230 lbs each. Ron approved ordering the stones and said to send them to the Public Works Garage. A deep discussion about finding historic graves. Steve remarked about Leeland Abbott and his family buried on Beaver Hill. Steve noted that he had seen newspaper articles in the Lewiston Daily Sun from the 1870's about a possible source for information. Tyler Hydiniak on the zoom link added his experience looking for historic foundations and gravesites on Beaverhill. He said there was a sheep farm on the ridge at one time and he'd like to help find information about the grave sites of historic veterans. Steve knows an archeologist to ask.

Motion by Ron, 2nd Elaine, unanimous: The board authorizes Steve Holmes to the purchase of 2 headstones.

Treasurer's Report: Elaine reported this week the payroll warrant in the amount of \$4,132.94 and the A/P warrant in the amount of \$80,024.32. The ending checkbook balance is \$262,476.50 **Motion by Elaine, 2nd Steve unanimous:** To accept the treasurer's report and pay the Payroll warrant in the amount of \$4,132.94 and the A/P warrant in the amount of \$80,024.32.

Ron added that he bought shelf brackets for Cindy Abbott to add shelving to the vault in the office.

Correspondence:

Steve explained that new employees are eligible to participate in a retirement plan that matches a 2% contribution from the employee. This was directed to myself, a new employee.

The town received a letter from Curravale farm on this year's farmshare program for the Town of Freedom. 10 residents signed up to receive produce and picked it up by August 23, 2022. The list of fresh farm produce provided was quite extensive and the letter shared their intention of continuing to participate in the Farmshare program.

Ron received correspondence that he and Cindy are listed as signatures on the Smithton cemetery Bank account.

Ron noted that the CMP bills have increased.

Steve will notarize Cindy's signature to release the liens on property that have paid up taxes to discharge tax liens of \$57.

Broadband Committee Report: Elaine reported that all cooperating towns had approved the Initiative for the Broadband coalition. She is recommending Phil Bloomstein as the representative for the Town of Freedom.

Old Business:

Ron addressed the Town's goal to clean up unsafe, abandoned buildings or dump sites. The efforts by the code officer have been ignored by the owners so the added step of sending a letter from the Town Lawyer is underway. Ron would like to meet in person with the Town Lawyer, Jackie Robbins and all Select persons to lay out some options moving forward.

Motion by Steve, 2nd Ron, unanimous: Meet with the Town lawyer, Jackie Robbins and Select persons to write a protocol for code violation resolution.

New Business:

Jackie Robbins sent a registered letter to Chris Fisher regarding the route 137 property.

Meeting adjourned by Ron at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Eleanor MacMakin