

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, April 5, 2021**

Present were Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernest Day, Jr. and Melissa Florio, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded the minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Hall.

Chairman Babb called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Also present was Bill Elliott, Rob Cunio, and Josh Shackford.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

The accounts payable and payroll manifests were reviewed as well as the red folder containing correspondence.

Day made a motion to approve the minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting and Non-Public Session held on 3/29/2021. Babb seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. White stated that there are three more non-public session minutes available in draft form that will be submitted for approval next week.

A letter received from the Heritage Commission regarding their membership was reviewed. Babb made a motion to appoint Alan Fall to the Heritage Commission. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion on who to appoint as a Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator for Freedom. Justin Brooks has been the liaison in the past. If he is not interested, Susan Marks will be asked.

A proposal from Vermont Tennis in the amount of \$8,686 for the resurfacing of the tennis court and repair to the basketball court and hockey rink was presented for signatures. Three companies were pursued for quotes but Vermont Tennis was the only company able to complete the work in 2021. Florio suggested adding a half court line for the option of pickleball. Babb recommended the hockey rink as a location for this. Day made a motion to have Babb sign the contract in the amount of \$8,686. Florio seconded. Babb abstained. Majority vote carried.

Day made a motion for Babb to sign the agreement with Vachon & Clukay in the amount of \$11,700 for 2020 audit services. Florio seconded. Babb abstained. Majority vote carried.

The request for additional contract amendment received from CMA Engineers on the Danforth Bay Project is still awaiting review by NH DOT and will be tabled until a response is received.

It was noted that the Spectrum outage is across the grid and not isolated to Freedom.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio reported 5 active Covid-19 cases while the State is reporting none, there were 8 calls for medical aid, 1 fire alarm, 2 trees/wires down, 1 call for service. The frame on the rescue sled has been repaired, it just needs to be reassembled. Forestry 2 is awaiting parts for the pump's carburetor. Hose testing was completed today with no issues. Fire danger is presently at Class III and forestry training will take place tomorrow night in preparation for the dry season approaching. Cunio reported that his leave time has been delayed until the 21st. There are no updates on the grants at this time.

Discussion on the 9-1-1 call to Cherokee Lane and the confusion of whether it was West Ossipee or Freedom as reported last week. It was noted to be an issue of the monitoring company.

Police Department – Chief Josh Shackford reported call volume including a domestic, assistance to a motor vehicle accident in Effingham, two 9-1-1 calls originating from the Thompson House, building check, domestic, domestic, attempted theft, used needle recover, VIN verification, and a civil standby. Freedom will not be participating in hosting a drug-takeback day. Chief will receive prescription medications at any time and dispense into the collection bins in Ossipee or Madison as needed. Florio suggested collection bags be circulated to the Resource Coordinator to be given to the seniors. The Explorer is due for brake service this week. Shackford presented the new tickets he had printed to include the updated fine schedule adopted in 2020. Florio discussed a press release to notify the public of the updated fine schedule. Shackford responded that it is not necessary because most offenders are short-term, out-of-state. He did suggest new signage for the beaches this year.

Shackford reported he met a potential candidate for the third full-time position and a background check in in process. Shackford is shooting for a June 3 target date for hiring based on preliminary figures. Discussion on staffing shortages in surrounding towns and the recruitment process.

Florio received an inquiry from Huckins Road regarding increased boat traffic on the lake. Cunio responded that Marine Patrol should be contacted. Various complaints received for loud music, fireworks, explosions, etc. are often received with locations unknown. All agencies are suffering from staffing shortages making it difficult to keep up with call volume.

Shackford stated that the money from the ticketing will be retained by the town. Offenders have the ability to mail in the fine or pay at the Town Office. It was noted that no money is generated from issuing speeding tickets.

Old / New Business / Discussion:

Babb questioned if Madison is addressing short-term rentals. Shackford responded that the Zoning Officer is going after those properties with active listings that are in violation but is not pursuing efforts like Conway is. Babb announced receiving email correspondence with concern on the number of short-term rentals in Freedom. Concern is not only for running a business in zones not permitted, but also for the septic capacity; listings are offering high occupancy numbers for properties with only 2–3-bedroom septic approval as well as no regulation to meet fire and other building codes, egress, and the complaints that come along with transients. Babb requested short-term rentals be added as an agenda item tentatively for 4/12. A meeting request from the ZBA will also be tentatively scheduled that same night.

Florio announced being contacted with a request to be the Freedom rep for roadside cleanup through Valley Pride. Discussion on how the program has been handled in the past. Bill Elliott stated that the Community Club has been responsible for coordinating this program for several years.

White reported that the audit went well last week; three auditors were able to come to the office last Wednesday and get a bulk of their review completed. Follow up will be taking place over the next few weeks as they continue.

Public Input:

None presented.

Non-Public Session(s):

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:38 PM pursuant to RSA 91-a:3, II (a) for personnel. Day seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Day-yes, Babb-yes, Florio-yes. All in favor, the motion passed. Babb made a motion to reconvene public session at 8:17 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion continued:

Day made a motion to increase James Mullen’s salary to \$80,000 effective May 1, 2021, in good faith as agreed on 1/6/2021. Florio stated that after hearing last week’s testimony from the department she would be hesitant to not to based on other demand. Florio seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed.

Question arose as to whether a help wanted ad should be placed for part-time police officers? White will check with the Chief.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Session – 3/29/2021	Approved
Payroll Manifest – week ending 3/31/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 3/31/2021	Approved
Letter of Commitment – Lakes Region Household Hazardous Collection Program	Approved
Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Brian Taylor (Map 7, Lots 6-2, 6-5, & 6-6)	Approved

Correspondence:

Report – NH DRA, USPAP report approval	Reviewed
Report – NH DRA, Freedom 2020 Sales Monitoring	Reviewed
Letters of Appointment – As voted 3/29/2021	Reviewed
Letter – FCC re: Bella 13, LLC application to NH DES for water access structures	Reviewed
Letter – Matton Security Systems, LLC, business management change	Reviewed
E-Mail – ZBA, Request to meet for discussion on various matters	Reviewed
E-Mail – John Krebs, Request for enforcement on short-term rentals	Reviewed
Notice – Solitude Lake Management, herbicide treatment application schedule	Reviewed
Minutes – 2021 Town Meeting, abridged minutes	Reviewed
E-Mail – Lakes Region Planning Commission, seeking HHQ Coordinator	Reviewed
Letter – Peg Scully, Heritage Commission, Membership status and request to appoint	Reviewed

Being no further input, Babb made a motion to adjourn. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Melissa M. Florio