

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2020**

Present were Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernest Day, Jr. and Alan Fall, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, who recorded the minutes. Also present was Matt Tyler, Scott Brooks, Bill Elliott, Rob Cunio, and Ned Kucera.

Chairman Babb called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Non-Public Sessions:

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 6:00 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) for personnel. Day seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Babb-yes, Day-yes, Fall-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Babb made a motion to reconvene at 6:20 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

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 held on 12/7/2020. Babb seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Day made a motion to approve the minutes of the Non-Public Session held on 12/7/2020. Babb seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Non-Public Session:

Fall made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 6:30 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (d) for negotiation. Babb seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Babb-yes, Day-yes, Fall-yes. All in favor the motion passed. Babb made a motion to reconvene at 6:38 PM. Fall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Budget Review:

Highway – Road Agent Scott Brooks presented the Summer Highway budget for a total of \$276,132 with increases in the line item for road striping to \$14,000, and sander rental to \$8,200, for a total increase of \$10,250. The Winter Highway budget to remain level-funded. The General Highway total is \$245,500 including increases for the 2016 F550 line item to \$4,000, loader maintenance to \$6,000; both due to age and maintenance needs, and grader maintenance increase to \$5,000, for a total increase of \$5,000.

Brooks discussed Warrant Articles and questioned what projects that were not completed in 2020 are to be encumbered. He then reviewed current issues with the International and 2016 F-550, both needing repair that could experience delay due to parts availability. Brooks is in the process of obtaining quotes for the replacement of both. Day questioned if it's an option to contract the plowing versus the anticipated \$200,000 replacement cost? Brooks responded that he does not think so, he has been unable to hire for part-time help that has been advertised since October and even NH DOT is short-staffed. Discussion on how to proceed with encumbrances totaling \$178,000 from 2020 budget in order to consider a new truck purchase in 2021. White will reach out to the auditors/NH DRA for clarification. Babb questioned if there is any trade value in the International? Brooks

responded that the max force engine issue present will reduce the value and if it goes, the whole motor will need to be replaced. Discussion on manufacturer preference. Brooks will proceed with obtaining options for quote.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Department – Chief Rob Cunio reported a call for a cable line burning at the bridge. Follow up response received from Action Ambulance on delayed call response was discussed. Cunio stated that the response was given within the same day as his inquiry. There are no new positive cases of Covid-19, with 2 current cases on the list. All members of the department have been notified of appointments being scheduled to receive the Covid-19 vaccination. Cunio received notice that Freedom will be receiving an electrostatic decon unit awarded through a State Federal Grant award. Cunio will be arranging for pickup in Meredith between 10-2 on Thursday. The Firefighter's Assistance Grant is being applied for again this year with hope to replace the portable radios that were obsolete when received 15-years ago. Cunio is in the process of setting up a tentative ice rescue class and the Fishing Derby has been scheduled for 1/23/21 (ice permitting) with an alternate date of 2/6. There will be no bob house raffled this year due to the cost of materials but a Winchester Model 70 rifle with scope will be raffled instead. Discussion on the disposal of the old extrication equipment. Cunio stated the value of the tools to be received in exchange for the donation is approximately \$1,500-\$2,000. The extrication tools cannot be sold as they were obtained through grant funding. Babb made a motion to authorize the donation of the extrication tools to the Errol Fire Department. Fall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. EMR testing will be conducted by the end of the month with an allowance to complete the practicum within 1-year in order to get licensed.

Highway – Brooks stated all is going okay. There is plenty of salt and sand stockpiled. All equipment is ready but part-time help is needed; two positions remain unfilled necessary for efficient snow removal.

Old/New Business:

Bridge Update – Fall stated he attended a construction meeting this morning and the plan is to have the bridge re-opened on January 15. The high lake level has posed additional issues and the site is continually having to be de-watered and the pumping is insufficient to keep it from penetrating the work area. Discussion on elevation differences with the footings that have been placed, and a re-cast of another footing that is being done by Michie Corp. The plan is to have the concrete cure between the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

2021 Budget Review:

Freedom Aquatic Invasive Species Control – Chairman Ned Kucera reviewed the Lake Host Program funding with a request for \$2,500 again in 2021. Ossipee will be matching this amount and Effingham does not participate or fund. Kucera reviewed the milfoil removal/treatment conducted in 2020, areas of proposed treatment for 2021, including additional areas in Danforth Pond/River, Spindle Point, and Huckins Cove, and the contractors able to complete diver-assisted suction harvesting and herbicide treatment. Kucera is waiting to hear from the State of NH DES on the amount of grant award available as well as the Town's match. Estimates propose 30-acres of treatment area for \$8,000 less than 2020 totaling \$38,592. This will be a Warrant Article again in 2021. Donations have been received from Broad Bay, North Broad Bay and Berry Bay Associations for an account total of \$5,294.98 and there is a non-capital reserve account with a balance of \$6,420.60. Administration costs will remain level-funded at \$750.00.

Library – Warrant Article proposed for the operating budget totaling \$115,251, an increase of 6%

primarily due to an increase in part-time hours that will be used to fill hours previously filled by volunteers. This is due to guidance received from the Charitable Trusts Division stating that a volunteer cannot complete the same duties a paid employee does. A second Warrant Article request is to add \$2,500 into the Library's Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance is \$10,000. Babb stated unless there is a purpose for the monies indicated, there will be no Warrant Article to add the funds.

Cemetery – Fall reported that Fred and Joyce are okay with the Lakeview allocation and there is no change needed for regular cemetery maintenance. Level-funding.

Appointment:

Not applicable.

Discussion:

White requested a response from the Selectmen on an email sent by Dave Gonsalves regarding enforcement action for those in violation of the Totem Pole agreement. Babb responded that the Town has no intention to do anything different but does reserve the right to enforce as deemed necessary. Cunio questioned the period of closure for overnight camping? It was noted to be from November 15 to December 15.

White presented the Board with the employee performance self-appraisals that have been returned. A few remain to be collected, those that remain uncollected will be assumed to be content where they are. The Board requested copies for review.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes – Selectmen's Meeting – 12/7/2020	Approved
Minutes – Non-Public Session – 12/7/2020	Approved
Payroll Manifest – week ending 12/9/2020	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 12/9/2020	Approved

Correspondence:

Letter – Employee acknowledgement x2	Approved
Draft Building & Zoning Permit Application	Reviewed
2020 Budget Status Report	Reviewed
E-Mail – Dave Gonsalves re: Enforcement action in Totem Pole Park	Reviewed

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Alan G. Fall