

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, March 15, 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, Karrie Buttrick, Pat McCoy, Paul Elie, Bonnie Elie, Rob Cunio, Anne Cunningham, Scott Cunningham, Paul Olzerowicz, Justin Brooks, Janice Zecher, Scott Brooks, Brian Taylor, Diane Claveau, Rich Gray, Lawrence Claveau, Jan (?), Karen Collier, Susan Bygrave, and several other unidentified attendees.

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 Meetings and Non-Public Sessions held on March 8, 2021 and March 11, 2021. Babb seconded. Florio abstained (not present in capacity). Majority vote carried.

Public Input:

Bonnie Elie read a statement requesting the Board reconsider the recent termination of Janice Zecher and reinstate her as Administrative Assistant and defer making a decision on her replacement. Paul Olzerowicz spoke on his interactions with Zecher on the Planning Board and Trustees of Trust Funds and stated she was courteous and professional and requested reconsideration. Jan (?) concurred with statements made. Paul Elie also concurred stating he was familiar with Zecher's work and support to the Planning Board and Conservation Commission. Karrie Buttrick concurred. Karen Collier concurred stated that Zecher was approachable, made her feel comfortable obtaining information as a new resident, and requested the Board reconsider. Susan Bygrave agreed and stated it is a loss to the town. McCoy spoke on behalf of the Supervisors of the Checklist stating they have been pleased with Zecher's work and she never refused to do anything asked of her and would like to see her reinstated. Diane Claveau agrees with comments. Rich Gray stated he worked with Zecher at a previous job and she was professional and courteous. Lawrence Claveau agrees with everyone who has spoken and stated Janice is a great asset. Bonnie Elie stated that she has received several calls/texts/emails on this and encouraged people to not protest outside with signs in bitter cold conditions, but with the showing of people at tonight's meeting in support, she requests the Board take the request seriously into consideration. Brian Taylor worked with Janice in 2019-2020 to obtain census data and she has been helpful in obtaining tax records.

Appointments:

None scheduled.

Old / New Business/Discussion:

Day made a motion for Babb to sign the contracts for milfoil control. Florio agrees. All in favor, the motion passed.

Town Meeting Recap – The MS-232: Report of Appropriations as Voted was presented for signatures.

Babb announced receipt of information on the Ossipee Lake Road property including a court appointed guardian to an heir of the property and also a company was assigned by Bank of America as lienholder to take over the cleanup of the property.

Selectmen's Representatives to Boards/Committees – Day requested Selectmen's Representative to the Heritage Commission. Babb to Planning Board. Question of whether a conflict arises with Florio as Representative to the Forest Advisory Committee where her spouse is on the Conservation Commission.

Town Office Reopening Plan – White presented information from the CDC and other agencies on reopening the office. White stated she has spoken with the Town Clerk Libby Priebe and would like to start conversation to reopen in the near future with provisions in place. Day discussed the entrance/egress issue and stated that he feels more time is needed. Florio stated that Mark McKinley and Libby Priebe should discuss in more detail. All agreed to add back on as an agenda item for mid-April.

Carroll Lodge #57 Acquisition – Babb requested a copy of the motion/offer made to sell the Lodge to the Town for \$1.00 be sent to Florio. Babb stated they need to compile a list of costs and building needs. Florio questioned why the property is being offered and if there are other options for parking without acquiring the building with unknown/potential issues. What are the terms of the sale? Any restrictions? What is available for actual use by the Town? Day agrees that more information is needed. Is a right-of-way or easement available instead? Babb requested a note be sent to Master Alan Fall. The Board agreed to have Building Inspector Dave Senecal take a look at the building. Discussion on eligibility for L-Chip and other grant funding that may be available as a historical building. Olzerowicz is interested in finding out what the town would use the building for. Babb stated that primarily need is for the parking access. Collier has concern with stipulations that will be put in place, binding legal rights, and other contractual concerns stating it would be clearer to have the Masons rent the building from the Town. An unidentified person discussed an agreement Effingham has with the Masons to use the Library and grant funding obtained to restore the building. McCoy questioned the age of the building? Scott Cunningham verified it is older than the schoolhouse, estimated to be 1830's.

Florio reviewed a request for town land to be used for solar project. Babb suggested it be added as an agenda item for discussion.

Suggested revisions to the Minor Subdivision application were presented from Anne Cunningham. Cunningham stated that two recent minor subdivision applications were heard and they were able to act on them but the application is missing necessary information from the Subdivision Regulations that were updated in 2018. Additional changes incorporated include abutters mailing labels to be supplied by the applicant for applications with 15 or more abutters, and a word document of abutters for less than 15. Other towns require this already. Florio questioned why the applicant can't just supply them as a requirement? Day suggests the mailing label requirement for 10 or more abutters. The last page of the application also requires that someone from the Planning Board sign the application acknowledging it has been received; this appears to be redundant as the office already receives the application and notates receipt of fees paid. The Planning Board takes jurisdiction once it has been properly noticed. There is also no requirement in the laws. Babb commented that it should remain on the application because it starts the process and signifies the start of the clock for 21-days. Babb suggested the changes be presented before the Planning Board for recommendation.

Cunningham also stated the Major Subdivision application requires revisions and is more complicated.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Chief Rob Cunio reported call volume including 3 medical aids, fire alarm activation, CO alarm detection, 9 current Covid cases in town, wind storm damage with phone lines down on Libby Lane, and Huckins has just recently been restored. Issue with response from Consolidated Communications. Annual host testing scheduled for April. Inspection completed for the grant for the truck. They will begin getting forestry equipment prepped and ready for the upcoming season. Day suggested referring to the Public Utilities Commission for quicker response to the downed line issues.

Highway Department – Road Agent Scott Brooks presented the Board with a trade value received for the 6-wheel truck being replaced this year at \$20,000. The Board was in agreement that it would generate more to sell it outright. State bid pricing for the 1-ton will be researched for comparison based on the one bid received. With the postponement of Town Meetings, the quicker the trucks can be ordered, the faster they will be received but it will still be late into fall. Discussion on purchase options for the Mack 6-wheeler as outfitted. Brooks stated that there should be no price difference between vendors because it is based on municipal pricing with applicable discounts direct from the manufacturer. O’Connors (Westbrook, ME) and McDevitt’s (Manchester, NH) are the only Mack dealers. Brooks stated O’Connors is the closer dealer by at least 30-minutes for service needs. Babb requested a quote be obtained from McDevitt’s for comparison. With warmer weather conditions, Brooks reported the frost came out of the roads and they got soft quick. They will continue to get the roads raked out when conditions allow.

Transfer Station - Justin Brooks welcomed Melissa Florio to the Board. Nothing new to report.

An unidentified person suggested the Town contact abutter Bill Carney to discuss options for obtaining acreage for use for a parking lot at the rear of the Town Office as an option.

Non-Public Session(s):

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:27 PM pursuant to RSA 91-a:3, II (a) for personnel. Florio 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 8:52 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion Continued:

Babb made a motion for Day to sign the updated signatures cards with Bank of New Hampshire. Florio seconded. Day abstained. Majority vote carried.

Florio questioned why the Police Chief does not give a weekly report? Babb stated that he attends weekly but has not given reports more recently.

White discussed a complaint received from a resident regarding the Transfer Station. Day will address it with the employee in the absence of the Transfer Station Supervisor.

Day thanked Babb for the memorial dedication acknowledgement given for his father at Town Meeting.

Day made a motion to nominate Babb as the Chairman. Florio seconded. Babb abstained. Majority

vote carried. Day commended Babb for running a good meeting as Chairman.

Florio was welcomed to the Board and given contact information for Board members.

Day suggested removing the Lodge acquisition from the agenda until more information is available.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Sessions – 3/8/2021	Approved
Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting & Non-Public Sessions – 3/11/2021	Approved
Payroll Manifest – week ending 3/10/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 3/10/2021	Approved
MS-232: Report of Appropriations Actually Voted	Approved

Correspondence:

Report - Property Tax Lien Notices Mailed	Reviewed
Report – Lien Notice List	Reviewed
Literature – CDC & AIHA Guidance – Office Reopening Plan	Reviewed
Receipt – Primex re: Ballfield Bleacher Claim Payment	Reviewed
Receipt – Tax lien payment and summary of account	Reviewed
E-mail – Anne Cunningham re: Minor Subdivision Application Revisions	Reviewed
E-Mail – NH Solar Choices, LLC re: Inquiry for Town-owned land for solar farm	Reviewed

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Melissa M. Florio