

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, March 22, 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 Alan Fall, Janice Zecher, Bonnie Elie, Bill Elliott, Paul Elie, Brandon Buttrick, Karrie Buttrick, Daymond Steer, Anne Cunningham, Rob Cunio, Paul Olzerowicz, Josh Shackford, Justin Brooks, Susan Bygrave, Gail Bizer, and several other unidentified.

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 March 15, 2021. Babb seconded. Florio noted a correction to page 2 where Babb should be Selectmen's Representative to the Planning Board, not Florio. Babb made a motion to approve with the noted correction. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion carried.

Department Head Updates:

Fire Chief Rob Cunio reported call volume including 1 medical aid with a positive Covid exposure, 1 motor vehicle accident, 1 fire alarm activation, 3 CO detections, police standby, and a porch fire. The rescue sled is out of service for frame welding. The truck specs for the grant are in process. Cunio questioned if the bid for the fire pond dredging is all set to proceed with? Babb announced that four proposals were requested but only one company responded, GW Brooks. All were in agreement to proceed with the work outlined in the proposal received. Cunio discussed the purchase of NFPA National Fire Codes subscription stating the importance to have reference materials for propane and other fire-code related issues. The cost is an annual subscription of \$1,345.00 for a single user, 2018 version which will include all updates as they are approved. Cunio is able to support this expense in his budget. All were in agreement to proceed with the purchase. Discussion on ice rescue suits to be purchased. Cunio has obtained three quotes for comparison for the purchase of ice rescue suits. Copies of quotes received were provided.

Town Office – Town Administrator Ellen White stated that she is working on preparing for the 2020 audit scheduled for next week. The accountant was in the office last week to close out 2020 and wrap up any loose ends. The audit is going to take place primarily remotely again this year so materials will have to be gathered, scanned and sent.

Transfer Station - Justin Brooks announced the Transfer Station is starting to get busy and they are awaiting rain to burn off brush.

Discussion:

Babb announced that the Board met in non-public session last week after hearing the testimony of those in attendance requesting the reinstatement of Janice Zecher and the Board voted unanimously to not reconsider. Florio thanked everyone for their efforts in circulating and signing the petition received today requesting Zecher's reinstatement but stated that there are state and federal regulations

that restrict them from discussing personnel matters in public. Babb stated that public input on the matter will be limited to 5 minutes.

Public Input:

Janice Zecher stated that she requested a copy of her personnel file on 2/18/2021 and has not received it and has not received any response to her inquiries. Babb responded that the Town Attorney is handling the request and a letter was supposed to be sent in response two weeks ago. He has followed up and correspondence was issued late last week.

Paul Elie stated the understands what is protected under RSA 91-A but it is not right that the personnel file has not been received as requested. Elie questioned if the employee had been counseled, coached, and received annual performance reviews and requested the Board review their protocols to make sure they are following them.

Susan Bygrave questioned if there is an employee handbook that outlines the disciplinary procedures. Babb confirmed. Florio stated that they cannot discuss any details on the termination.

Brandon Buttrick stated that he took part in a veteran's exhibit display at the Freedom Historical Society last year and Zecher was very accommodating in providing town and cemetery records to assist him in compiling a list of veterans that he would have not been able to develop without her assistance.

Daymond Steer requested details on Zecher's term of employment. Babb referred him to contact White on Tuesday.

Babb closed the public input portion of the meeting. Questions arose on the time limit imposed. Gail Bizer stated that she was not at the meeting last week and did not get to hear the public testimony. Babb agreed to reopen for a brief period of time. No further public input received.

Appointments:

None scheduled.

Old / New Business/Discussion:

A request for a contract amendment on the Danforth Bay Bridge project was presented from CMA Engineers. White explained that the invoices for GZA, which is the firm that did the research and came up with the solution for the load bearing capacity issue, were omitted from CMA's billing and they total over \$34,000. The contract amendment signed in February was supposed to be inclusive of all change orders. Alan Fall stated that in his opinion, NH DOT is at their wits end with the project and there may be resistance in additional contract amendments. He suggested limited the liability to the Town's 20% match, as the invoice omission was an error of CMA and should not have happened. White suggested she contact Ron Kleiner at NH DOT to discuss prior to signing the request for contract amendment.

Request for town-owned land for solar farm – The Board reviewed the request received last week and all were in agreement that 3-phase electrical service is necessary for the project and is not available. White was asked to reach out to the inquiring company to inform them that there is no land option available.

A Private Road Acknowledgement and Notice of Limits of Municipal Responsibility for Breeanna Arnold's property located on Map 31, Lot 45, Alvino Road was presented for signatures. Day made a motion to sign. Babb seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Board/Committee Appointments/Re-Appointments – White reported that the question of whether a conflict would present itself with Florio as representative on the FAC and her spouse as a member of the Conservation Commission was confirmed to not conflict. Babb confirmed Selectmen's Representatives as follows: Babb - Planning Board, Day – Heritage Commission, Florio – Forest Advisory Committee. Discussion on appointment to the Broadband Committee as passed by Warrant Article this year. Florio volunteered to sit on the Broadband Committee. All were in agreement. Jerry Knirk will be contacted to see if he is available to serve as a town representative, if not, the second seat will be advertised for an interested candidate.

Non-Public Session(s):

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:36 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 7:47 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session at 7:47 PM pursuant to RSA 91-a:3, II (b) for hiring. 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 8:16 PM. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes – Selectmen's Meeting & Non-Public Session – 3/15/2021	Approved
Payroll Manifest – week ending 3/17/2021	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 3/17/2021	Approved
Private Road Acknowledgement – Map 31, Lot 45	Approved

Correspondence:

Notices of Decision – ZBA:	
Variance - Paul & Joy Nowak (24-14-21)	Reviewed
Variance - Devin & Lance Bolduc (01-01-01-20)	Reviewed
Variance & Special Exception - Heidi & Matt Glavin (15-06-21)	Reviewed
Special Exception - Paul & Joy Nowak (24-14-21)	Reviewed
Variance - Lindsey Archilla & Denise Savoie (37-7-21)	Reviewed
E-Mail – NH Solar Choices, LLC re: Inquiry for Town-owned land for solar farm	Reviewed
Petition – Request to reinstate Janice Zecher as Administrative Assistant	Reviewed

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen White, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Melissa M. Florio