

**Town of Freedom  
Selectmen's Meeting  
Wednesday, December 20, 2023**

Present: Selectmen Chairman Les Babb, Ernest Day, Jr., and Melissa Florio, and Stacy Bolduc, Admin. Assistant, who recorded the minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Office.

Chairman Babb called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Also, present were Chief Cunio, Scott Brooks and Ned Kucera, Katherine Watts.

**10:00 AM Public Hearing  
Katherine Watts 123 Freedom Point Rd. Laying out a winter road.**

Les opened the public hearing at 10:00 am. He explained that Katherine Watts petitioned the board to lay out her extension of road off Freedom Point Rd. The select board consulted with the road agent, and he stated that portion of the road was in excellent condition and would not cause hardship to plow. The Fire Chief was also consulted and agreed that having the additional space to turn around if there was an issue on that road would benefit public safety. Abutter Ned Kucera has no problem with the proposal. Katherine Watts thanked the board for the board's attention to the request. Les responded that this decision is a benefit to the town. With no further comment Les made the following motion.

**Les made a motion to lay out the additional portion of Freedom Shores Rd. from the current ending point of the Kucera's to the hammerhead that the town required Ms. Watts put in for the public safety vehicles and plows to use, Motion seconded by Ernie; Motion passed unanimously.**

**The public hearing closed at 10:06 am.**

**Public Meeting**

Highway- Scott reported that the roads held up to the last rainstorm with no washouts. They did have trees down on multiple roads which should be cleaned up today.

Fire- Rob reported Rich went to Concord and picked up Tyvek suits and masks. The gun raffle was a success. A gentleman from Standish won the rifle. The storm closed a couple of roads for a bit due to lines down.

With the aid of a handout, Rob reviewed prices for bailout kits, also known as personal escape system, that were discussed at the last meeting. Rob would like to go with Firematic because they will send a representative to replace the system if it is damaged. The budget shows \$17,000 in stipends because December has yet to be closed out.

Scott suggested a warrant article for the design of replacing the large culvert on Perry Rd. and by Cragged Mountain on Cold Brook Rd.

Melissa made a motion to allow Chief Cunio to use the funds remaining from the 2023 budget to purchase ten personal escape systems totaling \$4,930.00. Ernie seconded the motion; Motion passed unanimously.

Les went back to Scott's request to address the culverts. Scott questioned if one of the culverts that was designed for Watson Hill should be a warrant article and commented that the replacement cost for the loader is estimated at \$160,000.00 that's after the trade-in value of \$62,000 for the current loader. The hours on the machine are what determine the trade in value. Scott got a preliminary quote from CMA Engineers for the design, permitting, and engineering of the culvert on Perry Rd. came in at \$30,000 a year ago.

Scott will get numbers to Stacy for Charles Perry and Cold Brook culverts.

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Chief Cunio wants to do a new warrant Article for dredging the fire pond on Watson Hill and encumber the balance.

### **FAISC Budget**

Ned Kucera- Ned reviewed his budget as the following:

Ned budgeted for 20 acres but only 17 acres were harvested.

Weed Removal:

NH Lake Host- surplus no money needed for 2024.

DASH divers 2023 budgeted for 15,500 2024 \$16,600= \$1650.00 a day 10 days + set fee \$100.00.

Herbicide treatment- 2023- 23,800 2024 \$27,730.00 bid @ 25 acre.

Total contract amounts- 2023- 39,300 2024- 44,330.00 this will be a warrant article.

Administrative costs-\$750.00

Milfoil gift account- \$200.00

State Grants- it has been a 50% match for the last couple of years. We are still waiting for what 2024 match is and the State is still trying to figure out how to fund the grant.

*Les thinks the money coming in (the 50% match) must be appropriated.*

*Warrant article should read \$44,330.00 with 50% \$22,165.00 to come from taxation and 50% to come from state grant. (assuming the match is 50%). We will find out the match before the book goes to print.*

The appointment letter for Megan Broderick was reviewed for the FAISC and it was decided to appoint her for a term of one year.

**Ernie made a motion to appoint Megan Broderick to the FAISC for a term of one year, motion seconded by Malissa; Motion passed unanimously.**

Ned told the board that he will be stepping down in April from FAISC.

### **Town Buildings**

The roof of the village fire station was discussed because it is in bad shape. Rob explained that part of the building houses the sea graves, the boat in the winter, the F550, and a trailer with an ATV. Ernie supports being proactive instead of reactive. Les said it would be a warrant article.

Stacy will talk to Mark about the roller blade rink at the school whether to tear it down. The mowing contract was discussed.

Rob left the meeting at 11:00 am.

Combining the lines for mowing the ball field and the grounds line was discussed. There was a brief discussion about putting it out to the voters to create a public works position. The increase in the town building budget includes a \$1,000 increase to the maintenance repair line bringing it to \$8,000 and increase the porta potty line to \$5,000. Stacy needs to call Kathy Garland to see if she has any porta potties available to rent for next year.

Electric rates are coming down and we locked in for fuel rates, so those lines did not change.

### **Town Office**

Tax collector costs vs tax collector salary was discussed, and the town clerk budget was discussed.

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**The increases in the office budget include:**

- Health Ins.
- Postage
- Computer support

Libby came before the board to present her budget. The increase in the town clerks' budget is for the deputy clerk. Les asked Libby what she thought about making a warrant article for the additional hours being requested for the deputy clerk but after some discussion it was decided the deputy clerk position would be a max of 26 hours with a yearly salary max \$29,800.00 thus not needing a warrant article because it is not a full time position. It was also discussed that the deputy clerk could cross train to be the deputy tax collector and in the future the tax collector could also serve as the deputy town clerk.

Town clerk costs would go from \$5,600.00 to \$7,000.00 for computer and training expenses.

**Melissa made a motion to hire Lakes Region Computer based on the December 14, 2023, sales quote for purchase and the installation for a server for \$5,375.99 and accept Lakes Region proposal for providing IT support, Les seconded the motion; Motion passed 2-0-1. Ernie abstained.**

The other increase in the budget is for the phones.  
The phone line is up due to the new phone system, the new amount is \$7,000.00.

**Elections-**

Ernie talk to Don Johnson and he is in agreement with having the January elections at the Town Hall. ZBA will have to move their meeting to the next night and re-notice Devon Bolduc's abutters.

He will be at the Selectmen's meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Employee raises were discussed.**

Being no further input, Florio made a motion to adjourn. Day seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.  
Adjourned at 12:23 pm.

The meeting adjourned at

Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on \_\_\_\_\_:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leslie R. Babb

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Ernest F. Day, Jr.

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Melissa M. Florio