

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, April 22, 2024**

Present: Selectmen Less Babb, Ernest Day, Jr., Alan Fall, and Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator, who recorded the minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Office.

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

Also, present Chief Cunio, Jamie Mullen and Scott Brooks, Darwin Moulton, Roberta MacCarthy, Brandy and Karri Buttrick, Janice Zecher, Rick Davidson, Anne Cunningham, Renee Wheaton, Sue Hoople, Roberta Macarthy, Susan Marks.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

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

Ernie made a motion to accept the minutes and non-public minutes of April 15, 2024, motion seconded by Alan Fall; motion passed unanimously.

Department Heads-

Highway- Scott reported that they are still cleaning up from the storm. They are working with a logging company to haul away the bigger stuff. The work should be done in two to three weeks.

Police- Jamie reported that he and Rich have been attending court appointments and attending training. Jamie will be in arms instructor school next week.

Transfer Station- Ernie introduced the new Transfer Station supervisor, Alan Libby. Alan reported that the brush has been coming into the transfer station, and he has gotten prices for chipping it. Metcalf has hauled five loads out today, but twenty-five loads came in. Chipping will be done in a day. Ernie asked about expanding the area. Alan responded that you can only bring so much brush and still be compliant with the State. Chipping could cost up to 10,000 dollars. Stacy asked about burning at another location other than the transfer station. Cunio explained with that amount of brush the risk is high. The board was unanimous in bringing in the chipper/grinder as soon as possible. Alan will arrange for the chipper/grinder tomorrow.

Appointments

Rick Davidson came before the board to give an update on the senior coordinator position. He explained that the more successful Renee is, the more challenges arise in services that people want. With the aid of a handout Renee updated the board about her process and explained she belongs to groups that are involved with mental health and food insecurity groups.

Chief Cunio stated the meeting had to be moved to the Town Hall due to the number of people.

Les made a motion to recess the meeting to move to the Town Hall, motion seconded by Alan; motion passed unanimously.

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Renee continued her update. She has folks who need assistance with yard work regarding shoveling and spring/storm clean up. Renee connects people with volunteers who are interested in helping in these areas.

Emergency Concerns:

- Renee had people reach out to her to say nobody checked on them during the storm.
- She is also working with the Gibson Center and OCC to write a grant to purchase backpacks that are equipped with weather radios, flashlights and next- of- kin documents.

Les asked about the program that is in place that people can sign up for to get on a list to be checked on every day. Jamie said it is a voluntary list they need to sign up for. Renee said she will be providing some education during Old Home Week regarding emergency preparedness.

Renee questioned if she was covered for what she was doing. Les said yes, for the scope of work she was hired for. Renee concluded her update saying she is enrolled for some training and has been trying to get Tracy Hayes contact information. Stacy will send Renee Tracy's contact information.

Old/New Business

Les proposed renovating the Masonic Hall for the office and turning the downstairs back into a classroom for the Selectboard to meet in. This would save moving the office staff while the renovation was being done. This way both buildings would be preserved. He would like public input to rehab both buildings before putting real numbers to any project.

Points of discussion:

Anne Cunningham- voice concern as the chair of the Town Office Advisory Committee. She explained they did a lot of work looking at using the two buildings and concluded that the cost would be prohibitive due to the structural issues with the masonic temple, and she does not think this is what came out of town meeting for a plan. She said the direction was to get costs for rehabbing the existing town office and thinks this is a large departure from that concept. She is concerned that the costs at 2025 town meeting will be a lot higher fixing both building and it has not been studied what it will take to fix the masonic temple. She is afraid it will be voted down, and we will be back where we started.

Karri Buttrick- loves both buildings but is concerned about the structural issues with the masonic temple and bringing everything up to code. She thinks the focus should be on the town office.

Darwin Moulton- read the engineer's report for the Masonic Temple and he agrees it would need a new foundation, but so will the town office because it has fluctuated. He voiced concern that the town clerk's office is not big enough, and the lack of storage, and how it is accessed. The Masonic Hall's first floor is big enough to accommodate both office staff and the town clerk with service windows. The area that needs to be fixed is upstairs and can be concealed with sheet rock.

Karri Buttrick- thinks the foundation should be studied by an engineer and cannot see how we can have two expensive projects going on at the same time.

Susan Marks- agreed and voiced concern how any of this could be done without the vote of the people.

Les wants the people's input about the Masonic before an engineer is hired. He questions whether it is worth investigating. When the engineer comes to do the final analysis for the office, he will also look at the masonic hall but, if there is not enough support for the idea then they will not spend the money.

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Robert MacCarthy- thinks both buildings should be preserved, and that we should try to get money from the State. She thinks the Masonic building has more potential for getting funding.

Brandy- supports hiring an architect now and whoever is hired probably has a structural engineer and they can look at the foundation at the town office and at the sometime have him look at the masonic building. He further added to abide by what the town wanted; the first step is to hire an architect to get things started.

Alan Fall- supports Brandy's comment's and wants to get an architect hired as soon as possible because time is going by fast. He commented on the engineers' report for the masonic building. He said the building has stood in its current condition since 1927. His knowledge of the roof structure is that it is no different than it was fifty years ago.

A brief discussion on who has been reached out to for architects.

Ernie- supports what Brandy said and wants to get started hiring and engineer /architect.

Alan- Doesn't think the engineer's report for the Masonic Lodge is entirely correct. Once the design process is started, we may know what structural mitigation may need to be done for the lodge building if it is costs effective than maybe a warrant article would be added in at town meeting and design the school office space and keep in mind we can move office staff into the lodge temporarily.

Alan will reach out to the architect who designed the public safety building to see if he is available.

Anne summarized what she heard, and Les concluded that they would bring in an architect to do a plan for the town office, review the masonic hall for structural soundness, and see if it is cost- effective to fix the issues.

Public Comment

Sue Hoople discussed Wabanaki. She submitted plans to the office that have not been before the FCC yet. She gave a history of what she found for deeds at the registry. Sues questioned on behalf of the FCC if the town can lessen the impact if the campground goes ahead with its conversion.

Rob- reported that he spoke with 2c1 chief. He is still waiting for a response regarding the shelter. Stacy received gift certificates from a bakery from an anonymous doner for crews that worked the storm. Certificates were given to department heads.

Non-Public

Agenda item next Week:

Being no further input, Alan made a motion to adjourn. Ernie seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. Adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Consent Agenda:

Payroll Manifest – week ending – 4/17/2024	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 4/19/2024	Approved
Meeting Minutes 4/15/224	Approved

Correspondence:

Pictures of Rocky Beach from Mark	Reviewed
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Eversource 2024 filing of the HB-700 forms	Reviewed
NHDES letter regarding Tax Map 26 Lot 9	Reviewed
Site is stable.	
Case law for forestry committee 31:112 management	Reviewed
LRPC Regional Transportation Newsletter	Reviewed
Section 80:88 Real estate Liens	Reviewed
Memo for LEOP Meeting	Reviewed
Henney Historical Fund grants email	Reviewed
Renee Wheaton – update	Reviewed

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Alan G. Fall