

**Town of Freedom
Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, November 18, 2024**

Present: Selectmen Alan Fall, Gary Williams and Stacy Bolduc, Admin. Assistant, who recorded the minutes. This meeting was held at the Town Office.

Fall called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Also present: Alan Libby, Scott Brooks, Rich Laferriere

Public: Megan Broadrick, Kerri & Brandy Butterick, Steve Genest, Brian & Kate Chaput, Paul Elie, Jeff Nicole, Susan Douglas, Peter Keenan, Dan Evarts and two other residents from Square Brook Estates.

Review of Mail, Sign Manifests, Approval of Minutes

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

Gary made a motion to approve the meeting minutes & non-public minutes of 10/30/24 & 11/04/24, motion seconded by Alan Fall; motion passed unanimously.

Department Head Updates

Transfer Station- Alan Libby reported the compactor needs repair on the slides. It will be after Thanksgiving before the work can be completed. One of the pistons is also leaking because improper oil was put in the compactor. ATF oil was put in instead of hydraulic oil. The leak could be a result of the oil that was use is very thin. If the pistons need to be repaired, they will cost \$2,500.00 apiece.

Alan was approached about putting a box at the transfer station for needles. Currently the needles are put in a hard container and the should be taped shut. Alan does not support this proposal.

Due to the number of people attending the meeting and someone needing ADA compliance, Alan made a motion to recess the meeting to move to the Town Hall, Gary seconded the motion; Motion passed.

7:10 pm at the Town Hall.

Alan Libby continued his transfer station report. If the recyclables fail, then Alan will use one of the open containers. The new containers are waiting for wheels.

Highway- Scott reported Huckins Rd. was paved last week most of the loam is spread. Hydro seeding will be done this Wednesday, and the shallow areas will be done by hand. They will be setting the precast on the box culvert Wednesday morning and the road will be open Thursday afternoon. The easements that were sent to Scott for the conduit for the fiber optic lines on Burnham Road were not adequate for the project. The easements were for the poles that go up through the woods and for an area a mile and half from where they are working. The only easement that was correct was for 114 Burnham Rd. Alan stated he doesn't think they need any easements. The bigger concern is how they leave the road when they are done. Gravel will be put down on the shoulders on Huckins Rd. Friday, then he will start work at the transfer station.

Fire-

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Police- Rich reported the individual that went through the house will have his day in court December 3rd.

Public Comment

None

Insurance –

Stacy is still waiting to hear from Voya if they can start the HRA January 1st. Megan stated the good news is that the Town can go directly through Voya to meet the expectation that were laid out to the employees however you need to give them ninety days' notice to get on their plan. Stacy is still waiting to hear from them if they will make an exception. Options if they can't do January 1st will need to be worked out. If they can do January 1st, they will not backdate any claims to the first of the year. Gary suggested that the town would then go with Health Trust for the first year and then let Voya know we would like to join their plan for 2026. There is a question about whether the board needs to meet on Wednesday. Stacy said we need to wait and hear from Voya. Health Trust has been notified of our intent to stay with them.

Square Brook Estates- Please see attached for full proposal.

Dan Evarts came before the board to get permission for limited snowmobile use on the roads that the Town maintains for the winter in Square Brook. He explained Square Brook organized a task force to try and find a way for snowmobiles to have limited access to snowmobiling during the winter roads period.

He opened by giving the history of the town maintaining the roads in Square Brook. The timeline goes back to 1969 -2007 when a special meeting was held to petition the town to take over the roads for the winter. At the July 2024 meeting the residents of Square Brook requested that the no snowmobiling on the roads in Square Brook be revisited to find a compromise. The following was proposed:

The Community of Square Brook Estates hereby request that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Freedom grant approval for the limited use of snowmobiles on the privately owned roads, solely in the Square Brook Estates Community, under the following provision and restrictions:

- The operation of snowmobiles will be Soley for the purpose of direct travel between private residences in Square Brook Estates and the snowmobile trail entrance.
- The operation of snowmobiles will not be permitted during periods of snow removal or road maintenance by the town.
- The operation of snowmobiles will not be permitted until roads have been cleared following a plowable storm.
- Operators of snowmobiles using said roads, or portions thereof, shall keep to the extreme right and shall yield to all conventional motor vehicle traffic.

Dan said the community continues to appreciate the excellent working relationship with the town and town's snow plowing including accomplishing required maintenance and upkeep and does not wish to jeopardize the currant winter obligations of the town. However, the history of approved snowmobile uses on these roads without damages or injuries wave in favor of continued snowmobile use.

Dan went through the history of road maintenance (See attached). Dan explained the use of snowmobiles has been a selling point for homes in Square Brook.

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He read from an RSA that stated that the Town can grant permission to ride on the public highways which is what is being asked with restrictions, Rich clarified the law. Please see attached.

Discussion:

Scott Brooks- Scott said everything presented tonight is with good intentions but it only takes one bad apple and unfortunately that is what has happened in the past. It takes two hours to plow Square Brook and it's very difficult to do with snowmobiles in the road. There are different types of snow and some of it is heavier and that is more difficult to control the truck because of the weight of the snow. When it's snowing is when they want to ride. Snowmobiles do not belong on a public road and the roads are public roads from November 15th- May 1st .

Dan proposed a compromise of only opening the backbone roads (Old Stagecoach Rd and Weona Dr.) that the snowmobiles can use to get to the trails if they get permission from homeowner to go across their land this would be in addition to the restrictions that were noted.

Alan Fall- stated the way he sees it is Square Brook has two choices: Do you want to have the roads plowed in the wintertime or do you want to ride snowmobiles. He suggested getting permission from the landowner to get to the trail heads.

Gary- Gary supports the Road Agent and the town's previous decision to not allow snowmobiling due to liability and the association has not looked into the use of private property as an alternative.

Alan said if it was a matter of a couple hundred feet, he would not have a problem with the proposal.

28 Skidoo Ally Dennis Toto- By not allowing the association to police itself because it is too dangerous is not good because now people would be puddle jumping from yard to yard and popping out of someone's driveway crossing the street at a right angle. Using the main road would be safer and letting the association enforce the restrictions.

It was reiterated that from November 15th – May 1st the road is a public highway, and restrictions cannot be reinforced by the public. The roads were laid out as public highway. Gary agrees.

Dan thanked the board for their time and for the excellent job of keeping the roads plowed.

Old Business:

Alan reported that the wood species has been tested for the masonic lodge and the results are back to Annette Dey and she is moving forward with the drawing for the remediation.

Beth Miller did the site visit for the historical assessment.

Budgets

Zoning Board- Peter Keenan came before the board to talk about the budget. There is no change in the budget for 2025, but they would like another alternate.

Zoning Officer-

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Salary is up because we have two people.
Training will go to \$960.00
Office Supply will go to \$500.00
Operating - \$ 2000.00
Computer Support- \$900.00
Phone-
Gas-
Vehicle Maintenance- \$4,900.00
The overall budget has doubled due to salary.

The police will be next week. Jamie is not present

FAC/FCC Trout Pond Road Repair-

Jeff Nicole came before the board to present the bids for Trout Pond Road Repair. He gave the backstory and reported on the site walk for the bids. There are two proposals. One from RWN and GW Brooks. Bids were opened at the joint FAC/FCC meeting on October 15th and then at the special FAC meeting on October 22 to review the bids and get a recommendation from the Town Forrester. At a special meeting on October 29th, the FCC accepted the FAC recommendation. The recommendation is to go with G.W. Brooks because of the experience and the bid was lower than RWN

Jeff asked how to raise the additional money for the project because it is over the warrant article #27 for \$37,000. The total contract price is \$64,790.00. Alan said that it would have to go before the towns people at town meeting. Jeff said they could hold a public meeting to get permission to withdraw the funds. Stacy said she was informed by the board when she asked if it that can be done Les said it stated the funds cannot be withdrawn unless it is put before the legislative body (town meeting). The funds will be encumbered and then another warrant article will be put on the warrant for the balance.

Gary made a motion to accept G.W. Brooks' bid granting the warrant at town meeting passes for the difference, Alan seconded the motion; motion passed.

Public Comment

Kate Caput came before the board with Bill Carney to ask the board to consider putting mini splits in at the town hall. Given the events that take place at the town hall they feel this is needed. They are looking into USDA grants and are hoping when Marks budget is discussed it will be considered. Alan said they are not opposed to the idea, but the board wanted to see another bid.

Consent Agenda:

Payroll Manifest – week ending – 11/13/2024	Approved
Accounts Payable Manifest – week ending 11/15/202	Approved
Meeting Minutes 10/30/24 & 11/4/24	Approved

Correspondence:

Amanda Sperry VOYA	Reviewed
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Being no further input, Fall made a motion to adjourn. Williams seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. Adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Bolduc, Town Administrator

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on _____:

Leslie R. Babb

Alan G. Fall

Gary R. Williams