



Freetown Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 5, 2020 – 5:00pm

Meeting Will Be Held Virtually

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J. Brown

5:00 P.M. Call to Order

Chairman Lisa A. Pacheco calls the meeting to order at 5:25pm due to the length of the previous meeting. Present: Selectman George L. Grunwald and Selectman Trevor R. Matthews. Also present: Town Administrator David DeManche and Administrative Assistant Timm McIntosh. Once in open session, the meeting was livestreamed at freetownma.gov/FREECAM and youtube.com/FreetownMA.

Executive Session

At 5:26pm, motion (Grunwald/Matthews) to enter into executive session, under the following exemptions, and to return to open session following; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

1. M.G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(3) – to discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares – Excel Recycling, LLC vs. Town of Freetown
2. M.G.L. c.30A, sec. 21(a)(3) – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Freetown Fulltime Fire Fighters Association because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.
3. M.G.L. c.30A, sec. 21(a)(3) – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Freetown Police Association because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

Atty. George Pucci of KP Law joins the Board in Executive Session.

At 5:56pm, motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to exit from executive session and return to open session; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

Board of Selectmen

4. Weekly Warrants numbered 015-018 for the month of October 2020

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to approve; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

5. Early Voting for November's State Election

Selectman Pacheco invited Town Clerk Jacqueline Brown to the meeting to speak about early voting. Mrs. Brown notes that all the information is available on the Town's website, including all applications, deadlines, and more. She touches on the major changes to the elections this year, brought on by the pandemic. She finishes by noting that her office is trying to do their best, and that election security and integrity is a priority here in Freetown and in the Commonwealth. She says all votes will be counted and invites residents to call the office with any questions they may have.

6. Warrant for the November 3rd State Election

VOTE: TM/GG to sign the warrant for the November 3rd State Election; p/u

7. Roles of each member of the Board of Selectmen

Selectman Grunwald wants to confirm that any individual Board member should only be acting on things approved by the full Board, that he is not allowed to do anything on his own. Selectman Pacheco confirms that anything that has to do with money has to be acted on by the Board, adding that she will never tell anyone to do anything that costs money. She says anything that the Board votes on must be carried out, but no individual Board member should be creating policies on their own. Selectman Grunwald is very confused by this, saying that a Board member cannot make any decisions unless the Board has voted on it previously. Selectman Pacheco thinks Selectman Grunwald is confusing the issue here. She gives an example: Selectman Matthews cannot set out and say, 'everyone has to wear a uniform', but if we are preparing to decide something, Selectman Matthews can go out and ask employees for input. Selectman Grunwald understands this.

8. Fall/Winter Holiday Schedule for Town Offices

Mr. McIntosh says this is a yearly agenda item. No request has been made for specific days off, but he put this on the agenda so employees can plan out their holidays. He notes that in previous years, the Board has closed the Town Hall to the public on Black Friday, and had employees use their time to have the day off, and closed Town Offices early on both Christmas Eve and New Years' Eve, not requiring employees to use their time.

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to do as we have done in years past; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

9. Transfer from the Reserve Fund for Transfer Station Cameras

Mr. DeManche says he has talked to the Accountant on this, and has learned that no transfer is necessary; there is funding in place already for supplies that is typically returned, which can be used for the cameras. He recommends a vote of the Board to spend the money.

VOTE: Motion (Grunwald/Matthews) to spend up to \$1,500 on the cameras for the transfer station; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

10. Change Order #1 for Fire Station No. 1 Apparatus Bay Doors Contract with Acme Waterproofing Co., Inc.

Mr. DeManche explains this change order, in the amount of \$1,502.47, is due to a modification in a ceiling joist.

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to approve; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

11. Amended COVID-19 Travel Policy for Employees

This agenda item is on hold.

12. Installation of Town Meeting-Specific Notification Signs

Selectman Grunwald thinks we do a poor job of notifying residents of Town Meetings. He has seen signs in other communities at critical intersections that we should also be installing. Selectman Matthews asks if Selectman Grunwald is speaking of the LED Highway signs, noting that that sounds expensive; Selectman Grunwald says while those can be explored, he was thinking of giant sheets of plywood, 4' x 8'. Mr. McIntosh asks where these would be installed, asking if they would be installed next to the signs already installed at the Town's two critical intersections; Selectman Grunwald says those signs are too small. Selectman Pacheco thinks we should be upgrading the existing signs; she asks that this be added to Old Business while options for new or upgraded signs are being explored by Mr. DeManche. The Board will vote on this when options are available to them.

13. License for MBTA Conservation Land and Discussion on Acquisition of 15 Richmond Road

Mr. DeManche says this came from an email from Jean Fox with MassDOT. He says the MBTA is acquiring land at Forge & Richmond Roads, the parcel they are trying to license will allow for access to the wetland. It was recommended by Town Counsel to do this this way instead of a deed transfer. Secondly, the MBTA is acquiring 15 Richmond Road, and the Town has expressed interest in this property previously. Conservation is already working on this acquisition. Tonight, Mr. DeManche is looking for approval to enter into a license agreement for the land abutting the wetlands. Selectman Pacheco thinks the license should be an interim one until the Town gets the property.

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to sign into an interim licensing agreement until such time as the property can be taken over by the Town; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

14. Ambulance Abatements/Write-Offs for the Month of September, 2020

Mr. McIntosh notes that at the last meeting, Selectman Grunwald wanted an update to the ambulance revenues; that update is in the Board's meeting information for this meeting.

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to approve in the amount of \$98,211.88; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

15. Minutes: September 21st and September 25th

VOTE: Motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to approve; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

16. Town Administrator Report

- Mr. DeManche says that the annual MS4 Stormwater report has been prepared and filed. He says the report was compiled by Environmental Partners Group, working with Planning, Building Commissioner and Highway Departments, and this is all done for the year. He adds that we will have to follow up in the future for the year 3 requirements, and appropriate money accordingly.
- The Freetown Screw auction is set for October 15th. JJManning is putting together the marketing packet, and discussions with Mass Development are underway. Mr. DeManche says we have to show that we sold or tried to sell the property to remove our obligation to repay that grant, and Mass Development is on board. Selectman Grunwald asks if there is a minimum bid; Mr. DeManche says this is an absolute auction due to the environmental factors at play here. He reminds the Board that we will not be making a profit on this property. He says if we do not end up selling it, he would recommend contacting the Department of Revenue, as there is a path to eliminate our liability down the line.
- Finally, Mr. DeManche would like to thank the Fire Department, Highway Department, Chief Abbott, Mr. McIntosh, and the Regional School District for their help with the Special Town Meeting. Selectman Pacheco agrees, saying these things take a village. Mr. DeManche will be sending out letters of thanks.

17. Police Station Update

Selectman Pacheco says there are no new updates since the Building Committee meeting earlier this evening.

Board of Health

18. Results from Board of Health Trash & Recycling Survey

The Board has the survey results in their meeting information. Selectman Grunwald would recommend calling Republic into a future meeting and have them address the issues brought forward by the survey, to ask them what they are doing to remedy this. Mr. DeManche reminds the Board that the contract is expiring next year, but as an exempt service, it does not need to go out to a formal bid; he thinks having companies submit proposals would be the better route. Selectman Pacheco says this process can start right after the new year, and we can invite Republic to a meeting soon.

Personnel Board

19. Senior Clerk in the Town Clerk's Office

This item was taken out of order while Mrs. Brown was present. She says she included a senior clerk in her budget request for this fiscal year, with funding starting in October for training purposes. Mrs. Brown has held off until now, thinking that the person should probably start after the election. She asks that this position be posted along with the others. The Board has no objection. Mrs. Brown will pass along the job description she has on file.

VOTE: Motion (Pacheco/Grunwald) to post for the hiring of a senior clerk for the Town Clerk's office; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

20. Request for Extended Leave of Council on Aging Director Barbara Place

Selectman Pacheco notes that the Board has already extended bereavement leave for Ms. Place, and would think allowing the use of sick time would be appropriate now. Mr. McIntosh says Ms. Place will be out until at least October 24th.

VOTE: Motion (Pacheco/Grunwald) to extend the leave of absence, using whatever time Ms. Place has available; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

21. Change of Status for Interim Board of Health Agent Mary Freire-Kellogg, effective September 21, 2020

Mr. DeManche has met with Selectman Grunwald and Ms. Freire-Kellogg and they came to an agreement on her working Tuesdays and Thursdays full days, at the previous pay rate, plus inspections. This would be his recommendation.

VOTE: Motion (Grunwald/Pacheco) to accept that recommendation; motion carries two votes to none, with Selectman Pacheco abstaining.

22. Hiring Process for Senior Clerk for the Board of Selectmen & Town Administrator's Office

Mr. McIntosh says this was requested by Selectman Matthews previously. Selectman Pacheco thinks we should just do what we have done previously, delegate the hiring process to Mr. DeManche; the Board does not need to vote on this.

23. Board of Health Agent Vacancy

VOTE: Motion (Pacheco/Grunwald) to re-advertise for the Board of Health Agent; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

24. Current vacancies: Clerk for the Zoning Board of Appeals, Clerk for the Finance Committee, Clerk for the Building Committee, Clerk for the Economic Development Committee, Senior Clerk for the Conservation Commission (posted), Senior Clerk for the Board of Selectmen & Town Administrator (posted)

Mr. McIntosh says the Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals has spoken to the Planning Technician about taking that clerk position, but it must be posted internally as well. Selectman Grunwald asks if a 19-hour position to deal with all these would make sense; Selectman Matthews asks if a stipend-based position would make sense. Selectman Pacheco does not think there is enough work here for a regular position but thinks the stipend approach would work; we were doing that previously. The Board directs Mr. McIntosh to post the Recording Clerk vacancies.

25. Appointments:

- Timmothy McIntosh as Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, Personnel Board & Town Administrator, effective September 25, 2020
- Alexandra Golz, Beverly Sadeck, Jeffrey Amaral, Myra Sweet and Robert Rushton as Election Workers, effective October 5th, 2020
- Appoint Lisa Pacheco, Richard Medeiros, David DeManche, Jean Fox and Will Sienkewicz to Freetown Vocational Education Exploratory Committee, effective October 5, 2020

Selectman Matthews wishes to take all the appointments as one item.

VOTE: Motion (Pacheco/Grunwald) to appoint all as noted; motion carries unanimously.

Old Business:

- Town Hall Phone System

Mr. McIntosh reports the system is finally installed and operational, though there are still a few kinks to work out.

- Job Descriptions
- Board of Assessors Staffing
- Town Administrator Position –

Mr. McIntosh reports that after the Screening Committee evaluated the schedule, they realized having a recommendation to the Board at the October 19th meeting would be too rushed. They will have a recommendation on November 2nd. The Board has no problem with this.

At 6:50pm, motion (Matthews/Grunwald) to adjourn; motion carries unanimously after a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Timm McIntosh
Executive Assistant

List of Documents/Exhibits Used by the Board in this Meeting

- Draft Warrant for the November 3rd State Election
- Letter from Administrative Assistant re: Fall/Winter Holiday Schedule for Town Offices
- Draft Change Order Number 1 for Apparatus Bay Doors Contract with Acme Waterproofing Co., Inc.
- E-Mail correspondence from J. Fox re: License for MBTA Conservation Land and Discussion on Acquisition of 15 Richmond Road
- Draft memo from Board of Selectmen & Fire Chief to Town Accountant re: Ambulance Abatements/Write-Offs for September, 2020
- Report of Ambulance Revenue
- Draft minutes of meeting of the Board of Selectmen on September 21st and September 25th, 2020
- 2020 Curbside Trash & Recycling Survey results, downloaded on October 1, 2020
- Draft Change of Status Report for Interim Board of Health Agent
- Draft Certificate of Appointment for T. McIntosh, J. Amaral, A. Golz, R. Rushton, B. Sadeck, M. Sweet, D. DeManche, J. Fox, R. Medeiros, L. Pacheco & W. Sienewicz