

Freetown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 15, 2023 – 5:30pm
Police Station Community Room
15 Memorial Drive, East Freetown, MA

RECEIVED
FREETOWN TOWN CLERK
2023 JUN -7 PM 3:18

Call to Order

Selectmen Trevor Matthews called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. This meeting will be recorded and will be available on the Town's YouTube page. Selectmen Jared Zager, Selectmen Carlos Lopes, Interim Town Administrator Deb Pettey and Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza were present.

- Motion to go into Executive Session and return to open session was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes at 5:31pm
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote
- Vote: Selectmen Lopes -yes, Selectmen Zager - yes, Selectmen Matthews - yes

Executive Session

Discussion/possible action on the following topics

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 – **Charles Macomber**
- Motion to adjourn Executive Session and return to open session was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes at 5:45pm
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote

Board of Selectmen

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

2. Discussion, and vote whether to approve, not release, the executive session meeting minutes from 5/3/23.
 - Motion to approve, not release the Executive Session meeting minutes from 5/3/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote
3. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the open session meeting minutes for 4/18/23.
 - Motion to approve the open session meeting minutes from 4/18/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
4. Presentation on the Master Plan Process by SRPEDD.

Philip Hu, a Principal Comprehensive Planner with SRPEDD which is the Regional Planning Agency covering Southeastern Massachusetts presented a regional planning process. They are seeking a buy-in from each community of priority areas and how they help our community. Priority Development Areas (PDA) are areas for additional growth, meet regional needs, good transportation and infrastructure. Priority Protection Areas (PPA) are areas important to protect, significant natural or

cultural resources including habitats, water resources, historic resources and agriculture. In Freetown there are 10 PDA's covering 1,379 acres and 3 PPAs covering 12,297 acres. There will be a kick off during March – May 2023, Local Workshops in June – September 2023, Review Drafts of local PDAs and PPAs in September - December 2023 and a Regional Screening in January – February 2024.

5. Discussion, and vote on whether to renew the license between the Town of Freetown and The Freetown Regional Food Pantry for the Old Police Station to be utilized as a food pantry.

Craig Cabral from the Food Pantry was present and announced the Freetown Food Pantry is a success. We have 75 to 100 Freetown families a week and the same from surrounding communities being Rochester, Fairhaven, Lakeville, Dighton and Berkley. They also service the Council on Aging and the Seniors individually as needed. They also help 35 to 40 families a week with the Backpack Program, which is a partnership with the Superintendent of schools to send backpacks of food home with the students. Our partners are Stop and Shop, Ocean State Job Lot, and Fall River Amazon. They supply four to six pallets of food and paper products a week. Stop Shop for example, calls us when there is overstock of fresh chicken. People from the community come and help out. Ms. Pettey stated the Food Pantry requested a three-year renewal, she is concerned given that we are in the middle of these buildings processes and recommends a shorter term because we may need that space before the three-year term. There is a clause that says we can terminate at any time but we want to give them as much notice as possible to relocate and continue services. Two years would be adequate for both parties.

- Motion to renew the license between the Town of Freetown and The Freetown Regional Food Pantry for the Old Police Station to be utilized as a food pantry from 6/8/2023 through 6/30/2025 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

6. Discussion and vote on whether to recommend & approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Omnibus Budget as written.

Ms. Pettey stated the proposal from department heads has not changed. The Finance Committee is not recommending the salaries that were requested by the department heads. Highway, Clerks, Librarian and Board of Health Agent. Selectmen Matthews doesn't agree with that. Selectmen Zager agrees if we lose them, it will cost more to replace them. Selectmen Lopes stated we have good employees and I disagree that they deserve something is not in line with the finance committee is recommended for sustainability for the town. Do I want to give them the higher percent sure but sustainability wise they recommend four percent looking at long term projections of our town that puts us right in line so maybe it takes more than one year to get there. Selectmen Zager stated the way the future looks next year they may not be any raises. Ms. Pettey stated the difference is about Seventy-Eight Hundred. Selectmen Zager noted it is a little different with Chuck and Cheryl because they are elected. The total number of the budget, minus the Water Department is Thirty Million Five Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand, One Hundred and Sixty-One Dollars and Ninety-Six Cents. The Water and Sewer Enterprise budget is One Million, Five Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Five Hundred and Eight Dollars for a total budget of Thirty-Two Million One Hundred and Nine Thousand, Six Hundred and Sixty-Nine Dollars and Ninety-Six Cents. The Finance Committee number is Thirty Million, Five Hundred Eighty-Five Thousand, Three Hundred Twenty-Seven Dollars and Thirty-Two Cents. The difference is Seventy-Eight Hundred Dollars.

- Motion to recommend & approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Omnibus Budget as written was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Matthews.
 - Vote: Selectmen Zager - aye, Selectmen Matthews - aye, Selectmen Lopes - abstain
7. Discussion and vote whether to review, close and finalize the Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrants for 6/5/23.
- Motion to review, close and finalize the Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrants for 6/5/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
8. Discussion and vote regarding owner using the undeveloped portion of Proprietors Way for access to land.

Nick Velozo stated they believe Proprietors Way to be a town owned property extending from Dartmouth going through past Chace Rd to the state forest. His family owns 22 acres in the back behind one of the properties and he is looking to develop a single house lot for himself and use Proprietors Way as access. Proprietors Way from what they found is 66 feet wide. He would talk to the fire department or the Police and see how wide they would like them to go. They would like to do a fourteen-foot gravel way to the one lot which is twelve hundred and fifty feet back. Right now, this is the only access to that property. It is not land locked just that there are no roads to get there. There are always concerns about development in the future but there is quite a bit of wetlands back there to get even two house lots especially this one property which is map 240 plot 86. There are 3 properties called 0 Proprietors Way. He will be going through some old town warrants to look at Proprietors Way but from a map from the Bristol County Commissioners plan dated 1895 has Proprietors Way in existence from Billy's Lane all the way up to Lakeville. Across Chace Rd, that is all conservation land. Ms. Pettey stated the difficulty in this is determining if the town owns it or not. From all of the sources we have looked at and reviewed it would appear it is owned by the town but we cannot find anything that actually gives us that information. We cannot find anything that tells us we do not own it either. Mike McCue stated no one is paying taxes on it. Chuck Macomber, Highway Surveyor has no concerns. Ms. Pettey's concern is he needs permission to improve this roadway if the town in fact owns it, from the road commissioners. If that happens and he puts in a roadway we, the town will own it. The issue becomes the maintenance of it. It would be fine as long as Nick Velozo is there but what happens down the road. Mr. Velozo is willing to pay for the access. He is willing to discuss what can be done. Selectmen Lopes stated Mr. Velozo has done his homework. Ms. Pettey stated the Board would need to grant permission to improve Proprietors Way. There may be requests for easements down the line. The town will have to sign an easement for the electricity. The Board needs to determine who is going to govern the actual road construction and drainage. They will need approval by the Conservation Commission. Ms. Pettey thinks it should be deferred to the Planning Board as well. For it to be a street we need to define what is a street. They will defer it as they have control as the road commissioners. They will figure how it is construction and in the best interest of the Town since we are going to own this. Mr. Velozo has contacted a civil engineer. Mr. McCue stated to have all the copies of all the research so that we have something to fall back on. Ms. Pettey wants copies on whatever he has to show that Freetown may have ownership and documents showing how he plans to construct the roadway. Conservation will want them as well.

- Motion to grant approval for the property owners of map 240 parcel 86 to improve Proprietors Way from Chace Road to their forementioned lot with the requirement that the Highway

Surveyor approves the plans and supported documentations are included for the records was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.

- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
9. Discussion, and vote to move to a four-month billing cycle for the ambulance billings effective 7/1/23.
- Motion to move to a four-month billing cycle for the ambulance billings effective 7/1/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
10. Discussion, and vote on whether to approve the ambulance abatements and write offs for April 2023 in the amount of \$93,847.18.
- Motion to approve the ambulance abatements and write offs for April 2023 in the amount of \$93,847.18 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
11. Discussion, and vote on whether to approve the Request for Appropriation Transfer between or within departments from the Highway Dept. in the amount of \$15,000.00

This was a Highway Department salary from a no longer employed person and with this extra money will help their operational budget which is down to Three Thousand Dollars.

- Motion to approve the Request for Appropriation Transfer between or within departments from the Highway Dept. in the amount of \$15,000.00 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
12. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the spending plan from the Council on Aging for the Formula One Grant.

The My Senior Center yearly bill of \$1,350.00 and a mini fridge, about \$200.00. Increase in weekly hours from 16 to 19 hours for Jacqueline Garell for March through June. The full amount of the grant is \$2,155.99. Ms. Pettey stated this is a portion of the grant. The rest will remain undetermined. The Formula One Grant is given by the state every year based on the number of seniors that we have. Selectmen Zager asked if there are certain purview that it has to fall under for how you can spend it? COA Director Rebecca Frias stated their treasurer believes it should be spent on the seniors and this is all for them.

- Motion to approve the spending plan from the Council on Aging for the Formula One Grant was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
13. Discussion, and vote on whether to issue a proclamation recognizing Freetown's first responders in honor of Emergency Medical Services Week May 21-27, 2023. The Proclamation was read by Selectmen Matthews.
- Motion to approve the proclamation recognizing Freetown's first responders in honor of Emergency Medical Services Week May 21-27, 2023 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

14. Discussion, and vote on whether to approve the Class II Motor Vehicle License for Main Street Gas & Auto Sales, Inc. effective through 12/31/23.

- Motion to approve the Class II Motor Vehicle License for Main Street Gas & Auto Sales, Inc. effective through 12/31/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

15. Discussion, and vote on the MMA MunEnergy Electrical Program for Town Buildings.

Ms. Pettey stated this is the same type of aggregation we do for the town residents. Massachusetts Municipal Aggregation do this for the municipalities. They negotiate with the utility companies to get a lower rate than Eversource for us. The rate changes every day. To lock into the contract, I would need to sign it the same day. The Board needs to determine the length that you want to lock it in for from a one to five-year period.

- Motion to enter a five-year term with MMA, MunEnergy Electrical Program for the town building was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

16. Discussion, and vote to approve Deborah L. Pettey to sign documents related to the MMA Electrical Program for Town Buildings.

- Motion to approve Deborah L. Pettey to sign documents related to the MMA Electrical Program for Town Buildings was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

17. Discussion, and vote to approve the content of the postcard for the Annual and Special Town Meeting on 6/5/23.

- Motion to approve the content of the postcard for the Annual and Special Town Meeting on 6/5/23 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

18. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the agreement between the Town of Freetown and Pitney Bowes for postage meter at Town Hall effective 7/1/23-6/30/26.

- Motion to approve the agreement between the Town of Freetown and Pitney Bowes for postage meter at Town Hall effective 7/1/23-6/30/26 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

19. Discussion, and vote whether to award the Brush/Yard Waste Chipping at the Transfer Station RFQ to North Eastern Tree Service, Inc.

Selectmen Matthews asked if they were the only bidders, and the price was Eighteen Thousand Dollars, Ms. Pettey confirmed yes.

- Motion to award the Brush/Yard Waste Chipping at the Transfer Station RFQ to North Eastern Tree Service, Inc. was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

20. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the Interim Town Administrator to approve and sign documents related to the agreement with North Eastern Tree Service, Inc.
 - Motion to approve the Interim Town Administrator to approve and sign documents related to the agreement with North Eastern Tree Service, Inc. was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

Personnel Board

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

21. Accept the resignation of Robin L. Kendrick from the Council on Aging/Library Community Building Committee effective 5/1/23.
22. Accept the resignation of Walter J. Sawicki from the Health Insurance Advisory Committee effective 6/30/23.
23. Accept the resignation of Melissa Frappier as Payroll Coordinator effective 5/24/23.
 - Motion to accept 21,22,23 as written was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
24. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the following appointments:
 - a. Thomas Matthews to Council on Aging/Library Community Building Committee effective 5/15/23-6/30/23.
 - b. Harrison Goyette & Alex Columbus as Parking Control Officers effective 5/11/23-6/30/23.
 - Motion to approve appointments a-b made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
25. Discussion, and vote on whether to keep or eliminate the alternate position for the Council on Aging/Library Community Building Committee.
 - Motion to keep the alternate position for the Council on Aging/ Library Community Building Committee made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
26. Discussion, and vote on whether to approve the Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Signal Operator Dwyer.
 - Motion to approve the Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Signal Operator Dwyer made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
27. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Town of Freetown and Public Employees Union, Local 272, LIUNA.
 - Motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Town of Freetown and Public Employees Union, Local 272, LIUNA made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

28. Discussion, and vote whether to approve the disclosure of appearance of conflict-of-interest form submitted by Sgt. Thomas Ashley Jr.

- Motion to approve the disclosure of appearance of conflict-of-interest form submitted by Sgt. Thomas Ashley Jr. made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
- Vote was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

29. Discuss personnel issues and space concerns.

Ms. Pettey stated Melissa Frappier resigned and we need to fill that position. We had someone resign within the clerk's office. There may be some movement within the town hall. The floater may be going into the payroll coordinators position. Then we need to look for a part-time person in the assessors, planning, and clerk's offices. She could combine them in a way to make one full-time and one part-time person. But the concern is where to put them and with no extra parking at town hall. We cannot solve this problem tonight but just reiterating the problems we are having within town hall. A lot of departments need more staff. They are working at 110% and I can't give them staff because there is no more room in that building. She just wants the Board to know about it. Selectmen Lopes stated they would like to share some ideas with the Board. Selectmen Lopes, Ms. Pettey and Building Commissioner Carl Bizarro did a walk through the town hall looking at the floor plan, to see if simple changes can be made to make more room. Maybe changing offices, moving tables or desks, moving the POW chair and flags to the police station, looking at square footage and weight of the building. Come back to the board after town meeting or the summer to present to you what we found with suggestions moving forward. Selectmen Matthews is fine with this. Selectmen Zager is concerned with making changes and then did it really gain us any space. Ms. Pettey wants to look at maximizing every inch of what we have. We have the Collins Center study to see how they looked at it as well. We have grant money left to have an architect draft plans if it makes sense. We have to worry about supports. We also have the school house. All this is preliminary.

30. Interview for Police Chief position.

a. Sgt. Scott Rose

Sgt. Scott Rose has been a police officer for 32 years. Started in 1992 as a part-time reserve officer in the Town of Berkley. In 1994 as a part-time officer, he was upgraded to a full-time status waiting for a full-time Academy. In 1996 he attended full-time Police Academy. He worked in the Town of Berkley for a year in a half while employed for the Town of Freetown. Then a full-time opportunity came here in Freetown. He worked as a patrolman, promoted to Sargent approximately 10 to 12 years ago and held that rank up to this point. He has been working as a Patrol Supervisor along with other responsibilities of an Accreditation Manager and Training Supervisor. Prior to law enforcement and directly out of high school he did enlist in the United States Army. Served three years in active duty stationed in Fort Polk LA. Also enlisted in the United States National Guard unit in Fall River for six years. Left there with the rank of E5 Sargent. He lives here in Freetown, loves the community and a humbling experience working here in town. Selectmen Lopes asked what makes you feel you are the right candidate for this Police Chief position? Sgt. Rose believes right after high school and being groomed for constant public service, such as a soldier for the US Army, other ranking staff members and learning the experience of being what a good leader is all about. Even after active duty, National Guard, and the police department. In the paramilitary organization rank is relative to law enforcement. He was able to display that as he continued on with his career and always looking forward to better

himself as a leader. Selectmen Lopes asked what do you foresee a challenge for yourself in this role over the next few years and how to overcome those? It's a big transition moving from the current position into the Chief's position. We have been slowly trying to provide a clear transition into this point with Chief Abbott by taking the time and going over certain roles and responsibilities as a chief. He has been able to sit with him and gather all that knowledge as much as I can with the limited time that I have to be able to apply that as I go forward. Chief Abbott has almost 25 years of experience. Too harness all that knowledge I wish we could have spent more time with him directly. We are doing the best we can. We are working with all the staff members and gathering their feedback which is all very important and relative because it all has different aspects of their positions and its only going to make my decision making better as we go forward. Selectmen Matthews asked about his role and the time maintaining and giving us the accreditation program. The Mass Police Accreditation Commission is a non-profit organization that strictly provides professional law enforcement standards for the law enforcement community here in Massachusetts. There are over 360 standards and all these different types of standards is all relative to any type of aspect within the law enforcement agency. It could be relative to hiring personnel, your policy and directive system, your property and evidence room, property control and all aspects of the police department. Over the 10 years as an accreditation manager, it has been nothing more than a great learning experience. By going out into the other law enforcement agencies, visiting and seeing their operation practices and being able to bring it back here to the Freetown Police Department. We are always evolving in some form of operations in the department. Technology and operations change and we need to keep up with the times. By maintaining that relationship with the other communities and the other law enforcement agent we are able to share and pass that knowledge along so it is an easier transition for those changes that do need to be made. Selectmen Zager stated it is a huge network. He had the privilege of coming in and watching what they were doing and it is intense with the number of documents. It keeps you honest. Sgt. Rose continued, you invite an entity to come into your agency and open up all your files, complete tour of the station. They want to see everything that includes the police department and your responsibilities. You have to keep an open mind, if they do pick out a flaw we have missed, we should be able to embrace their recommendations and incorporate into the police department. We have always been an agency that welcomes that. I challenged the last assessment team to bring it on. I want you to find things that we can improve on. That is the only way we are going to make ourselves better. By the recognition of the accreditation award initially we received a certification, and then later we got the higher award of accreditation. That award is recognized through the town's insurance company. He did not know what the savings were. Selectmen Matthews asked him to speak of his higher education. He attended Bristol Community College and received his two-year associates degree, then later to Western New England College and received his Bachelors of Science in Law Enforcement Administration. I have always continued my education with the accreditation process and other courses that are provided through the Municipal Police Training Committee and Municipal Police Institute. Whatever he feels is beneficial to the department. Most recently he attended the course of Management Rights and Law Enforcement, being a very benefit topic as we go forward looking at this position. It is a constant upgrade in keeping up with your education to benefit yourself and the department. Selectmen Lopes asked if he had any question for the Board. He said no but you all have been a pleasure to work with. You have been upfront and honest, always been available to talk to. He looks forward to advancing his career and look forward to working with you all. Selectmen Matthews mentioned that we did get a letter from the union recommending you for this role. He stated it is important to have an open relationship with your bargaining unit. You can save a lot of aggravation if we can be able to work out these items to benefit the department. It benefits the town as a whole to work together.

Board of Parks Commission

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

- No topics for discussion

Town Administrator's Report

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

Old Business:

Potential discussion on pending items – action will not be taken at this meeting:

- Town Buildings

Public Input

The Board signed documents from tonight's meeting.

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40pm was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Lopes.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Lola Furtado

Administrative Assistant

List of Documents/Exhibits utilized by the Board in tonight's meeting:

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes from 4/18/23
- Letter - Freetown Regional Food Pantry
- License to Enter and Use Real Property Freetown Regional Food Pantry
- Omnibus Budget
- Warrant for the Special Town Meeting
- Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting
- Email – Nick Velozo - O Proprietors Way Map 240 Parcel 86
- Memo – Ambulance Billing Cycle
- Ambulance Abatements - Coastal
- Coastal Medical Billing Summary
- Request for Transfer – Highway Dept.
- Council on Aging – Formula One Grant
- Council on Aging – Spending Plan
- EMS Week Proclamation
- Main Street Gas & Auto Sales, Inc. – Used Car Dealer's License
- Constellation – Market Fundamentals Update
- Postcard for Town Meeting
- Pitney Bowes – Lease
- Quote Tabulation – Brush Chipping
- Resignations

- Robin L. Kendrick – COA/Library Community Building Committee
 - Walter J. Sawicki – Health Insurance Advisory Committee
 - Melissa Frappier – Payroll Coordinator
- Certificate of Appointment - Thomas Matthews – COA/Library Community Building Committee – COA Representative
- Letter of Interest - Thomas Matthews – COA/Library Community Building Committee
- Certificate of Appointment
 - Harrison Goyette - Seasonal Parking Control Officer
 - Alex Columbus – Seasonal Parking Control Officer-
- Email – Alternate Position COA- Library Committee
- Side Letter of Agreement
- MOA – Town of Freetown and Public Employees Union, Local 272, LIUNA
- Memo – Disclosure of Appearance of Conflict of Interest - Sgt. Thomas E. Ashley Jr.
- Potential Interview Questions for Police Chief Interview