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Freetown Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 28, 2021 – 3:30pm

Police Station Community Room

15 Memorial Drive, East Freetown

Call to Order

Selectmen Matthews called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. Selectmen Zager, Selectmen Grunwald, Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza, were also in attendance. Selectmen Matthews noted we will be going into Executive Session and coming back into open session.

- Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss #1 below and return to Open session was made by Selectmen Grunwald and seconded by Selectmen Zager.
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote
- Vote: Selectmen Grunwald – yes, Selectmen Zager – yes, Selectmen Matthews – yes

Executive Session

1. M.G.L. c. 30A, sec. 21(a)(3) – to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel. Interim Town Administrator.

Selectmen Matthews called the meeting to order at 4:00pm. Selectmen Zager, Selectmen Grunwald, Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza, Town Accountant, Kim Fales, Craig Cabral Food Pantry, Water & Sewer Commissioners Bob Parker, Paul Sadeck and Lee Baumgartner, Building Commissioner Jeff Chandler, S. Chandler from water dept. and Keven Desmarais from the Water Department were also in attendance.

Board of Selectmen

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

2. Discussion on Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds spending plan.
Selectmen Matthews asked Town Accountant Kim Fales to let everyone know about what we had direct aid we \$983,256.40 already received half of that. In addition, Bristol County has received \$110 million dollars the original estimate is \$18 million would come to Freetown. On July 15th the commissioners were still figuring out how the monies will be doled out. She feels we will receive about 10% of that amount the earliest of September 2021. Her estimate if we would receive \$1.5 Million from this money. She referred to the handouts she provided and noted monies can be used for water sewer or broadband infrastructure, public health spending, economic impact of public health emergency, lost public sector revenue premium pay essential workers. Selectmen Matthews thought this money could get us a big jump on the water/sewer plans for South Main Street as with this

investment it will open up the area for businesses to move in. Selectmen Zager said he was in agreement with Selectmen Matthews and had spoken with many residents and they all supported this project. Selectmen Zager asked what does the premium wages for works mean? Kim Fales noted that it can go towards essential workers like nursing home staff, health care workers, public health and safety staff, janitorial staff. Kim Fales noted we do have public health staff and a janitor. This could increase their pay for folks that have a lower rate of pay temporarily. It is something to think about and not take it off the table at this point. Ms. Fales noted that all attendees at the commissions meeting all wanted their share of these monies and the commission will most likely dole these monies out per capita. Rob Joes noted when they were doing police station project, they went over for the covid precautions on the project, can any of these monies take care of that? Kim Fales said we put in that to FEMA to cover the cost of cleaning of the facility which has been approved. The remaining costs of the extension of OPM is covered as well. Selectmen Matthews asked if there are any other ideas? Economic Impacts one Kim Fales said there is a very detailed calculation to determine that we are eligible, she is working on that calculation but that may be on the table. She also said Chief Abbott said one of the uses for public safety is to do additional training required for police reform, so that may be utilized for that as well. Selectmen Matthews asked do we have to have the spending in place before we can write any checks. Kim Fales said you are correct. Economic Impacts from Public Health Emergency category Kim Fales said that would be delivering assistance to workers or families, help the unemployed with food or housing insecurity, supporting small businesses, tourism travel hospitality, rehiring public sector staff and replenishing unemployment trust funds (we do not have one). Selectmen Matthews said if there was a small business that lost revenues, we could give them some monies. Kim Fales said we may need to do some outreach to the public to see what businesses are in need. The Board noted that we have not had anyone reach out to them on this as this point. Selectmen Matthews noted that people were home and used the businesses in Town more than usual. Keven Desmarais noted that the small businesses in town have received monies on their own as well. Rob Jose said if you want to utilize the PPE threshold was annual revenue had to be more than 25% degraded you could receive funds. Selectmen Matthews said we will need to do some community reach out to see if any businesses are in need and could benefit from these funds. We'll have to give this some more dialog. Keven Desmarais said our public health nurse can certainly use monies for contact tracing. Kim Fales noted that we still have a significant amount of money (over \$100,000) that can be used for public health needs and have no other immediate plans for this money other than contact tracing, temp staff at COA. In terms of public health the CARES funding may be enough to satisfy their needs. Fire Dept and EMS have a ton of PPE on hand so we will not need to purchase those items. Ms. Fales said we could do 10% to Public Health and 10% to economic impacts and the biggest bulk to water and sewer needs. The term for this money goes until 2024. Kim Fales suggestion now is to put percentages on each category now and when the Bristol County monies come in we can

either reevaluate the percentages of put that money that comes in to water and sewer projects. Selectmen Matthews said he was not sure we could decide percentages today but wants to know what are the steps we need to get the water & sewer plan going. Bob Parker said feasibility study for the plan and engineering. Keven Desmarais asked can these monies be used for engineering. Selectmen Matthews noted if we were to put \$100,000 in Assonet, we can't forget about East Freetown. Can we do sewer over there? Keven Desmarais said it only goes as far as Chippaway Road so it's not feasible. No proposed water or sewer projects on the table in East Freetown. Rob Jose said there is water plans that were shot down at a previous Town Meeting. Paul Sadeck said East Freetown we have water going up to the Fire Station and extend that line around the corner to Washburn and get good water to the Public Library. Selectmen Zager noted would there be issues with the bridge there? Keven Desmarais said that would fall to engineering but agreed this is a good project idea. This would also help the church across the street from the library as well. Keven Desmarais said in the areas we know there are trouble with wells it would make sense to do feasibility studies on these areas, so we have shovel ready projects. Paul Sadeck asked if we run this line down how would you assess the cost? Would you do a betterment? Selectmen Matthews said he wouldn't want to do it that way. Paul Sadeck said we'd need to get a lot of money from the state otherwise. Engineering is exempt from RFP but feasibility study is not. Last feasibility study was \$33,000 for sewer study – so to have it updated should be relative short money. Kim Fales said this can also be used for stormwater infrastructure. She believes we have a proposal from Environmental Partners for \$130,000 so we could use this for that purpose as well. This would also be a project for both sides of Town. Selectmen Matthews thanked everyone for their input on this subject.

3. Discussion on possible uses for the Living Trust donation from Rene Charbonneau .
Selectmen reviewed the memo with two options that were present to utilize this \$3,023. One was upgrade of the Council on Aging phone system other was parking/ticket system at Boat Ramp. Lu-Ann Souza noted she had a call with Park Mobile and they do not charge municipalities any fees for set up. The only time you are charged is when someone makes a charge .35 cents + their processing fees. She also noted that it will be discussed at the Open Space working group meeting the next day and it will be on the agenda for the Board on 8/17/21 to discuss. After discussion the group decided that option 1 (COA Phones) would be the best way to go with this donation. This will be put on the agenda for 8/2/21 for a vote.
4. Discussion, and vote on approval of Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Saltine Warrior, Inc. effective 7/1/21-6/30/22 for Highway Salt.
 - Motion to approve the agreement between the Town of Freetown and Saltine Warrior Inc. effective 7/1/21-6/30/22 was proposed by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

5. Discussion, and vote on approval of proposal from Environmental Partners to begin required work on MS4 Stormwater permit.

The group discussed that this was a ten (10) year permit and we have not completed any of the required work and are now entering year four (4) of this permit and needed to take action. This would be the start to the work needing to be done with monies we already have appropriated and then Environmental Partners will provide another estimate to get the remainder of the work up to date. Selectmen Zager we should think about looking at other companies for this service and see if we can get a better price.

- Motion to approve going forward with proposed work from Environmental Partners to begin required work on MS4 Stormwater permit was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote

6. Read and discuss letter received from Water & Sewer Commission regarding former police station. Selectmen Matthews read the letter from the Water/Sewer Dept requesting to move Water & Sewer, Conservation, Board of Health, Building and Planning Departments over to the old police station. He continued that we currently have the food pantry in that location for 24 months. Craig Cabral noted the food pantry is using most of the area at the old police station but can let the water & sewer dept use the front lobby of the building and they could cohabitate. Paul Sadeck said that this was previously discussed at building committee and Board of Selectmen meetings to use this facility to move people over there. Selectmen Matthews noted the food pantry is feeding 50-70 families a week and filling an important gap. If the COA addition is approved once it is done the food pantry will move over there and we can revisit moving these departments over to the old police station. The group decided that it was not worth moving now and perhaps wait and discuss again in another couple of years. Bob Parker said the COA project could be less than two years. Paul Sadeck also noted that it is very difficult to run the water and sewer dept as an enterprise fund and they would like to put an article on special town meeting to revert back to a Town Department. Since they are an enterprise fund it puts all the costs back on the 630 people using the water and sewer. The indirect costs space, insurance are set at \$90,000 this year. Selectmen Matthews noted this is not on our agenda and we will be happy to talk about it at a future meeting. Lee Baumgartner noted that there is too much weight on the Town Hall and noted that a previous building inspector showed him the granite posts are flaking off and moving people out of the building would reduce the weight on the building.

7. Discussion, and vote on length (months) of license for Freetown Food Pantry.

The group discussed how long the license should be issued for and came to the consensus of issuing the license for twenty-four (24) months.

- Motion to make the license for the food pantry to utilize the old police station to be twenty-four (24) months was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

8. Discussion, and vote on Eversource work request on S. Main Street.

This topic was not discussed at this meeting.

Personnel Board

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

9. Approve appointment list for Elections Workers (Appendix A) effective 8/16/21-8/15/22.
 - Motion to approve the appointment list of Election Workers with striking Roger Martin effective 8/16/21-8/15/22 was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
10. Discussion, and vote on extension of Timm McIntosh's contract through 8/31/2021.
 - Motion to approve the extension of Timm McIntosh's contract through 8/31/21 was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager.
 - Vote: was approved by unanimous roll call vote.
- Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Selectmen Zager at 5:05pm and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
 - Vote: approved in a unanimous

Old Business

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


- Town Beach
- Boat Ramp
- Town Administrator Search/Coverage

List of documents and exhibits used by the Board of Selectmen

- Agenda
- Overview document for COVID Fiscal Recovery uses
- Detail of uses for COVID Fiscal Recovery uses
- Memo on uses for Rene Charbonneau trust
- Agreement between Town of Freetown and Saltine Warrior for Highway Salt
- Proposal from Environmental Partners to start MS4 permit work
- Letter from Water & Sewer Commission
- License for Freetown Food Pantry's use of Old Police Station
- Eversource Public Notice and detail documents on S. Main Street project
- Reappointment list for Election Workers

- Contract Extension for Timm McIntosh

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lu-Ann Souza". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lu-Ann Souza
Executive Assistant