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Freetown Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 19, 2021 – 4:00pm
Police Station Community Room
15 Memorial Drive, East Freetown

Call to Order

Selectmen Matthews opened the meeting at 4:00pm and noted we will be going into Executive Session for the reasons #1-#4 listed below and will return to open session. Selectmen Zager, Selectmen Grunwald Attorney Corbo, Attorney Pucci, and Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza were also in attendance

- Motion to go into Executive Session was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
- Vote: Selectmen Zager – yes, Selectmen Grunwald – yes, Selectmen Matthews – yes
- Motion to adjourn Executive Session was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
- Vote: Selectmen Zager – yes, Selectmen Grunwald – yes, Selectmen Matthews – yes

Executive Session

1. M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21(a)(3) – to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Public Employees Union, Local 1144 LIUNA the Freetown Highway Department Laborers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares
2. 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 – Copart of Connecticut, Inc. v. Board of Selectmen of the Town of Freetown
3. 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
4. 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. Executive Assistant & Town Accountant.

Selectmen Matthews opened the meeting at . Selectmen Grunwald, Selectmen Zager, Attorney David Coppola, Mary Rezendes Brown, Mr. Rego, Kevin O'Sullivan, Eversource, Karen Newell-Lane, Eversource, Jeff Chandler, Building Commissioner, Travis Bowie, Historical Commission, Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza and Administrative Assistant Lola Furtado were also in attendance.

Board of Selectmen

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

5. Approve the meeting minutes from 6/21/21 & 6/28/21.
- Motion to approve the meeting minutes from 6/21/21 & 6/28/21 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
6. Discussion, and vote on road/sidewalk opening permits from Eversource Gas for
 - a. 111 S. Main Street
 - b. 1 Mason Road
 - c. 124 S. Main Street
 - d. 112 S. Main Street

Permits to remove/cap live gas pipes that are no longer used. Selectmen Zager said if it is needed later is it easy to reconnect. Mr. O'Sullivan said we would not reuse it and would put in a brand-new t in the line.

- Motion to accept these road opening permits was made by Selectmen Grunwald and seconded by Selectmen Matthews.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
7. Discussion, and vote on request to return deposit for sale of 106 N. Main St, Assonet, MA.

Mr. Rego who was set to purchase the property noted that the property was in very tough shape and was unable to get financing for the property at the price of \$300,000 that it was from the auction. He is aware that his deposit was non-refundable but appealed to the Board to reconsider as he felt the property was misrepresented at the auction and he was not allowed into the property to view it before the auction. Once he was allowed in the place was a mess. The Attorney representing the Town, David Coppola, was also in attendance and he noted that the auction was an as is auction and the deposit was non-refundable and the conditions of sale were read before the auction. After some discussion the Board decided to refund Mr. Rego all of his deposit less \$2,500 that the Town would keep to cover their costs. Mr. Rego thanked the Selectmen and left the meeting.
- Motion made by Selectmen Zager to return \$2,500 of Mr. Rego's deposit and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

8. Discussion, and vote on Pilgrim Sands Gilles Trapanier Memorial Enduro on 10/3/21 using 53 High St, Assonet as starting point.

The Board reviewed the application for the road race and Chief Abbott's recommendations. They decided to allow this annual event as long as Chief Abbott's recommendations are adhered to

- Motion to approve the event application for the Pilgrim Sands Gilles Trapanier Memorial Enduro on 10/3/21 using 53 High St. Assonet as the starting point was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

9. Discussion, and vote on insurance for 4 S. Main St.

Mary Rezendes Brown provided some background on the property and previous businesses that were there. She noted about twenty years ago it was taken by Treasurer for back taxes, the Town did not try to sell it and it just sat there and deteriorated. She noted it is on the national register for historical. Ms. Rezendes Brown said they had a buyer, but the Town wanted them to pay all the back taxes. In 1998 they had a grant and got two districts with over 200 structures on national register. Her hope would be this could be bought and made into some sort of business in there. The person who owns vacant lot next to it said it could be for sale. Selectmen Matthews noted that this agenda item is to insure this building and asked Ms. Rezendes Brown how she felt about insuring it. She noted that there is potential for this property and asked for Board's support to explore it. Selectmen Zager noted it's a tough sell as there is no off-street parking. Ms. Rezendes Brown noted the traffic is very fast going by there as it is wide open. The sidewalks will be done this year and there is parking next to the bandstand. She noted there was parking all along the storefront which slowed traffic down. Jeff Chandler, Building Commissioner said if something falls off the building it would need to come down. That is not an emergent need currently. He feels with Mary Rezendes Brown's connections she may be able to get some grants to rehabilitate this property. Lu-Ann Souza noted this property is not on the list of insured buildings so there is liability for the Town as it is not currently insured. She noted that MIIA stated they will not insure this property as it is owned by the municipality but not occupied by the municipality and due to the condition, they will not insure this property. Selectmen Matthews noted that this Board is open to selling it and open to grants and asked Ms. Rezendes Brown to let us know if she finds anything and that the Town will do the same to her. Ms. Rezendes Brown wants to know what the process is to sell this property. Selectmen Matthews said he did not know but would be interested in finding out.

- Motion to see what we can do about this property was made by Selectmen Grunwald and seconded by Selectmen Matthews.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

10. Discussion, and vote on applying for the MIIA Wellness Grant.

Lu-Ann Souza noted that Jessica Thomas brought this to our attention and noted that another Town got a health lunch approved for their staff and were approved for this grant. If the Board approved of the draft submitted by the Executive Assistant for this Ms. Souza would turn the application into MIIA. The Board thanked Lu-Ann Souza for putting this grant together.

- Motion to send in this grant application was made by Selectmen Grunwald and seconded by Selectmen Zager.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

11. Update on cameras at the Transfer Station.

Lu-Ann Souza let the Board noted 3 cameras would be \$263/month and the caveat is that we need to wait until union negotiations as being on camera is not in the Union Contract. Selectmen Matthews said we do want cameras there, Selectmen Grunwald agreed. Lu-Ann Souza said she would let Attorney Fair know the Town would like cameras installed and to see what the next steps on that would be.

12. Discussion, and vote on adding insurance coverage for two Town authorize notaries.

Lu-Ann Souza noted that the cost of the insurance seemed high and that she currently carries her own notary insurance and did not see a need for the Town to also insure her for notary. She also noted that Town Clerk, Cheryl Estrella had submitted a memo that was in their meeting packet stating she too thought it was too expensive and unnecessary. The Board agreed and decided not to pursue insurance for the two Town Authorized notaries.

13. Discussion, and vote on replacement/refurbishing town signs at Bandstand, Old Police Station, East Freetown Traffic Circle.

Lu-Ann Souza noted that five companies were asked to send in quotes for signs and only one sent a quote in that was over \$8,000 and that another company said they would send in their quote later this week. The Board decided to wait until the next quote came in to discuss this potential project.

14. Discussion, and vote on Special Fall Town Meeting date, location, time and timeline.

The Board reviewed the suggested timeline in their packet and agreed to have the Town Meeting on October 18, 2021, 7pm at the Freetown Lakeville Middle School. They also stated that the warrant would open on 7/20/21 and close on 8/9/21 for submission of articles for the Special Town Meeting. Would be on 8/17/21 agenda for Board approval to send to Town Counsel, then

back from Town Counsel for 9/7/21 meeting and closing warrant at that point , being sent to Finance Committee on 9/10/21 and post publicly by 10/1/21.

- Motion to approve the Special Town Meeting Monday October 18 2021 7pm at the Freetown Lakeville Middle School and warrant will open 7/20/21 and close on 8/9/21 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

15. Discussion, and vote on Mike McCue taking on Annual Town Report.

The Board noted the memo in their packet that Mike McCue would take on the Annual Town Report project for a stipend of \$1,000. The Board agreed that this was a great idea and that Mike McCue would do an amazing job.

- Motion to have Mike McCue do the Annual Town Report for a stipend of \$1,000 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

16. Discussion, and vote on MIIA Property and Casualty Group, Inc Rewards Credit in the amount of \$1,962.00.

The Board discussed the various options for the use of the credit from MIIA. Lu-Ann Souza noted that she checked with the Town Accountant who advised to apply the credit to a future bill with MIIA. The Selectmen agreed with Ms. Fales recommendation.

- Motion to apply \$1,962.00 MIIA Rewards Credit to a future bill from MIIA was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

17. Discussion, and vote to approve agreement from Woodard & Curran for Fiscal Year 22 Environmental Services for Howland Road Landfill.

Lu-Ann Souza noted that this was for the environmental monitoring for the landfill required by law.

- Motion to approve the agreement from Woodward & Curran for Fiscal Year 22 Environmental Services for the Howland Road Landfill was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

18. Discussion, and vote to sign warrant for annual unlicensed dogs.

- Motion to sign the warrant for annual unlicensed dogs was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: Approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

19. Discussion, and vote to approve the Ambulance Abatements in the amount of \$123,813.45 and Writes Offs in the amount of \$16,271.01 totaling \$140,084.46.

Selectmen Matthews wanted to check that the person who manages these would be coming to discuss this with himself and Selectmen Zager. Lu-Ann Souza noted that Chief Silvia was setting up that training and once the person comes back from vacation.

- Motion to approve the Abatements in the amount of \$123,813.45 and Writes Offs in the amount of \$16,271.01 totaling \$140,084.46 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote

20. Discussion, and vote to approve the contract between the Town of Freetown and Jessica Thomas.

Lu-Ann Souza noted that one item was revised in the contract for Tax Collector/Treasurer Jessica Thomas to include an additional stipend of \$1,000 for her certification as Tax Collector. The Board agreed this was a fair addition to the agreement. Selectmen Matthews noted this would also need to be approved at Town Meeting to appropriate the money to fund this.

- Motion to approve the contract between the Town of Freetown and Jessica Thomas was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

Board of Health

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

21. Discussion, next steps on hiring a Board of Health Agent.

Selectmen Zager note that the current interim Board of Health Agent, Dale Barrows is doing a great job but has committed on a temporary basis. He would like to post the full-time job right away to get the right candidate in this position as soon as possible. He noted that if the right candidate does not have all of the certifications in place the Town would be willing to get them at the Town's Cost. The Board agreed to proceed with hiring a full-time Board of Health Agent. Selectmen Matthews asked if the job was currently posted? Lu-Ann Souza noted that she was asked to remove the posting by the former Town Administrator. Selectmen Matthews said we need to repost it. Lu-Ann Souza asked if we want to amend the posting to note that we would be willing to train the right candidate as it will be difficult to find someone who has all the required training. Selectmen Matthews said he felt it would be impossible to find someone who has all the skills and would like to train someone who is just getting into the field who will hopefully stay with the Town long-term. Lu-Ann Souza noted that when she spoke with Dale Barrows he tentatively committed until January 2022. She also noted that Mr. Barrows said you do not have to have the soil certification to do a perc test which is something he is out doing regularly and that this training is only offered twice a year and it is competitive to get into one of these classes. Lu-Ann Souza will amend job posting and send to Selectmen Zager for approval.

Lu-Ann Souza also mentioned that Dale Barrows felt if we could add 2 hours a day Mon-Thu to Umberta St. Louis' schedule would be very helpful. We would need to check in with accounting to see if we have enough in budget to cover this and bringing in new agent and keeping Mr. Barrows to train them.

22. Discussion, and vote on hiring a company to manage the bi-annually food establishment inspections for the Board of Health.

Since the current agent is only part time there is not enough hours to keep up with the food inspections. Board of Health Agent, Dale Barrows, obtained two quotes from companies that can do this service for us to get us up to date. The cost will be less than \$2,000.00 to get us up to full compliance.

- Motion to hire Robert Either to do the bi-annual food establishment inspections for the Board of Health was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

Personnel Board

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

23. Approve the appointment of John Hartford as Equipment Operator effective 7/26/21-6/30/22.

- Motion to approve the appointment of John Hartford as Equipment Operator effective 7/26/21-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote
24. Approve to adopt the below ranking as it will establish the order in which vacancies are to be filled for Full-Time Police Officers.
- a. Michael R. MacDonald
 - b. Douglas R. Mongeon
 - c. Seth M. DeMello
 - d. Marc A. Gaspar
 - e. Adam D. Salinaro
- Motion to approve to the ranking as it will establish the order in which vacancies are to be filled for Full-Time Police Officers. Michael R. MacDonald, Douglas R. Mongeon, Seth M. DeMello, Marc A. Gaspar, Adam D. Salinaro
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote
25. Approve Conditional Offers of full-time employment for Michael R. MacDonald, Douglas R. Mongeon, Seth M. DeMello, Marc A. Gaspar and Adam A. Salinaro effective 7/19/21-6/30/22.

- Motion to Approve Conditional Offers of full-time employment for Michael R. MacDonald, Douglas R. Mongeon, Seth M. DeMello, Marc A. Gaspar and Adam A. Salinaro effective 7/19/21-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

26. Approve the MOA from Chief Carlton Abbott extending his contract effective 7/1/21-6/30/23

- Motion to approve the MOA from Chief Carlton Abbott extending his contract effective 7/1/21-6/30/23
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

27. Approve the appointments listed below effective 7/13/21-6/30/22

- a. Trevor Matthews to Economic Development Committee
- b. Jared Zager to Health Insurance Advisory Committee
- c. George Grunwald to Priority Development Committee
- d. Trevor Matthews as Sexual Harassment Officer

- Motion to Approve the appointments of Trevor Matthews to Economic Development Committee, Jared Zager to Health Insurance Advisory Committee, George Grunwald to Priority Development Committee, Trevor Matthews as Sexual Harassment Officer effective 7/13/21-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Matthews.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote

28. Discussion, next steps on obtaining an Interim Town Administrator position.

Selectmen Matthews would like to post the interim position. Selectmen Grunwald noted he got a legal opinion and can appoint one of the two candidates, David DeManche and Jack Healey and Selectmen Grunwald would like to appoint one. Selectmen Matthews said we need to work out the details on how much we can pay and what we want them to do. Selectmen Grunwald feels we need to move on this and take our time . Selectmen Matthews noted there was some misunderstanding as we had decided to post the interim position and interview candidates in open session. Selectmen Grunwald said he did not agree to this and would like appoint one of the two and feels there is no reason to not appoint one. Selectmen Matthews thinks we are not in a position today to make this decision as we don't have the terms of the contract and would like to speak to both of the gentlemen to speak with them. He also said other candidates have reached out to him as well. Selectmen Grunwald said let's bring them in and we can interview them. Selectmen Matthews is concerned on how this works and wants to go with the hiring process of the Town and the optics of how it looks. Selectmen Zager agrees about the optics and being transparent is very important. Selectmen Grunwald said we have two candidates everyone knows and if Selectmen Zager and Matthews talk to the Town Hall Employees for their opinions on each

candidates. Selectmen Grunwald would like to put a timeline on this. Selectmen Zager said he can have it done in a week. Selectmen Matthews will talk to Town Hall employees and candidates. Selectmen Grunwald said at our next meeting or one after that if you need more time we will make a decision. Selectmen Matthews asked Lu-Ann Souza to clarify process with Town Counsel.

- Motion to accept this was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded Selectmen Zager.
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

29. Appoint Chief Carlton Abbott as Keeper of Lock up effective 7/1/21-6/30/22.

- Motion to Appoint Chief Carlton Abbott as Keeper of Lock up effective 7/1/21-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Matthews.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

30. Appoint Lisa Pacheco as Public Records Clerk for Police Sub-Committee effective 7/1/21-6/30/22.

- Motion to Appoint Lisa Pacheco as Public Records Clerk for Police Sub-Committee effective 7/1/21-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager.
- Vote: was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Board of Park Commissioners

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

31. No topics for discussion

Please note: The Board may take up any other business to properly come before the Board that was not reasonably anticipated 48 hours before this meeting.

- Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Matthews
- Vote: approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

List of Documents and Exhibits used by the Board during this meeting:

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes 6/21/21 & 6/28/21
- Street Opening Permits 111 ,112, 124 S. Main St & 1 Mason Rd.
- Auction documents and letter to Mr. Rego re: 106 N Main St
- Email from MIIA regarding insurance on 4 S. Main St.
- Event Notification Application for Pilgrim Sands Gilles Trapanier Memorial Enduro
- Memo from Chief Abbott with recommendations for Pilgrim Sands Enduro
- MIIA Wellness Grant Application

- Memo re: Cameras at Transfer Station
- Email from Cheryl Estrella re: Notary Insurance
- Memo and quote for Town Signs
- Memo Special Town Meeting Timeline/location
- Memo re: Mike McCue doing annual town report
- Email from Kim Fales re: best use for MIIA Credit
- MIIA Awards credit information
- Woodward & Curran contract
- Animal Control Warrant listing from Town Clerk
- Ambulance Abatement letter from Fire Chief
- Memo re: Treasurer/Tax Collector Contract change and contract
- Quote from Burkner and Sons Food Establishment Inspections
- Quote from Robert Either for Food Establishment inspections
- Appointment slip John Hartford
- Eligibility list for new officers
- Letter from Chief Abbott re: Conditional Officers
- Contract between Town of Freetown and Chief Abbott
- Draft job posting Interim Town Administrator
- Draft contract Interim Town Administrator
- Appointment Slip Lisa Pacheco, Building Clerk

Respectfully Submitted,



Lu-Ann Souza
Executive Assistant