

TOWN OF FREETOWN
Finance Committee
3 North Main Street / PO Box 438
Assonet, MA 02702-0438
PHONE: 508-644-2201; FAX: 508-644-3342

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Minutes of

MEETING: 5:30 PM Tuesday, September 23, 2021

Council on Aging, 227 Chace Rd., East Freetown

Chair Gary Martin called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM.

Present: Chair Gary Martin, Kent Wilkins, Emily-Anne Dors, Margaret French, Katie Calheta, Christine Dupras (5:54), and Kim Johnson, Recording Clerk. Bob Alderson is excused.

Margaret motioned to accept the minutes from August 31, 2021, as written, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Margaret motioned to accept the minutes from September 9, 2021, with changes, seconded by Emily. The motion carried. 3-0-2. Katie and Kent abstained.

Kent motioned to accept the minutes from July 15, 2021, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Gary said that there is a request from the selectmen to increase the spending authorization limit of the Long Pond Boat Ramp revolving fund. There was some discussion about their \$9,000.00 limit. An additional \$1,407.72 is needed to pay for police details.

Kent motioned to increase the spending authorization limit of the Long Pond Boat Ramp revolving fund. Katie seconded. Vote was unanimous.

There was some discussion about where and how to sign the Revolving Fund Increase in Spending Authorization Form. There is a section at the bottom of the page that states "Board of Selectmen Action". It was decided that Gary would sign the form given and that he will follow up with Lu-Ann to make sure that is what he was supposed to do.

Gary said that the committee will go over each article and vote whether to make a recommendation or not.

Article 1- Engineering for the Stormwater Management Plan - **Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$130,000.00 for engineering for the stormwater management plan, including any costs incidental or related thereto, and/or take any action relative thereto.** The funding source will be Free Cash.

Christine motioned to recommend approval of article 1, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 2 – Board of Health to be elected independent of the Board of Selectmen - **Motion: To see if the Town will vote in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 41, Sections 1 and 2, to create a separately elected three-member Board of Health, thereby separating the Bard of Health from the Board of Selectmen; and further, in accordance with such vote, to amend the General By-laws, Article 1, Section 1.2 of , Election of Officers - Referendum Questions, by deleting therefrom the words shown below in strikethrough and inserting therein the words shown in bold underline, as follows:**

A Moderator; One Selectman, who shall also serve as ~~a member of the Board of Health~~ and a member of the Personnel Board; one Board of Health member, one Assessor, a Highway Surveyor, two Library Trustees"

and, further, to implement the vote taken hereunder, to place on the ballot at the 2022 Annual Town Election the following three Board of Health positions: (1) one for a one-year term; (2) one for a two-year term; and (3) one for a three-year term; and thereafter, all such positions shall be elected for three-year terms; finally, upon the election and qualification of the Board of Health as provided hereunder, the Board of Selectmen shall no longer have the authority of a board of health and all such authority, as well as any records, agreements, powers and obligations related thereto, shall transfer by operation of law to such newly elected Board of Health; and/or take any action relative thereto.

Margaret motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 2, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 3 – Add to Ballot to Appoint a Board of Health – Motion: To see if the Town will vote in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 21, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a three-member board of health, thereby separating the offices and responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Health, and, for such purposes, to place on the ballot for the 2022 Annual Town Election the following question as set forth in said Section 21:

"Shall the town have its selectmen appoint a Board of Health?"

with the creation of the new appointed Board of Health to take effect following the election at which the question is approved and Select Board appointments are made; and/or take any action relative thereto.

Kent motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 3, seconded by Margaret. Vote was unanimous.

Article 4 - Purchase of 0 Elm Street Tisdale Pond Dam and water line – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire, for general municipal purposes and by gift, purchase, and/or eminent domain, the parcel of land located at 0 Elm Street and identified on Assessors' Map 211 as Lot 29, together with Tisdale Pond, the dam, and other appurtenances thereon, including without limitation the existing pump station and all water lines running from said pump station to 170 South Main Street; and, further, to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, a sum of money for the foregoing acquisition, said acquisition being contingent the Board of Selectmen being satisfied with the safety of said dam; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into any agreements and execute any instruments as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this article; and/or take any action relative thereto.

Emily motioned to recommend approval of article 4, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 5 – Design Services, Project Mgt and Bidding for Renovation/Remodel of Council on Aging – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds the sum of \$550,000 to fund the cost of site evaluation, engineering and design services and project management services for the design, bidding and construction, including but not limited to schematic design, construction documents, bidding and construction oversight of addition and renovation of the Council on Aging Building, and any costs incidental and relative thereto; and further authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into any agreement and execute all documents including contracts for a term in excess of three years, necessary to effectuate the purposes of the Article, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Margaret motioned to recommend approval of article 5, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 6 – Availability of Articles to the Public – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 1, Section 1.1A of its General By-laws, relative to Availability of Warrants, by striking the words "seven (7)" each time they appear and inserting in place thereof the words "fourteen (14)", and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 7 – Posting Warrants – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 1, Section 1.1 of its General By-laws, relative to Posting of Warrants, by striking the existing wording and inserting in place thereof the following:

"Every Town Meeting shall be called by a Warrant directed to a constable, or other duly appointed person, who shall post attested copies of the said Warrant at the Town Hall, Guilford H. Hathaway Library, James White Memorial Library, Assonet Post Office, East Freetown Post Office, Freetown Police Station, Multi-Purpose Senior Center, Transfer Station, and such other locations as the Board of Selectmen may designate, at least fourteen days before the time of holding the Annual Meeting, and at least fourteen days before the time of holding any Special Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen shall also cause a copy of the said Warrant to be posted to the Town of Freetown website." And/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 8 – Standing Vote – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 2, Section 2.4 of its General By-laws, relative to Appeal Procedure by Voter(s), by striking the word "rising" and inserting in place thereof the word "counted", thereby eliminating the requirement for voters to stand while preserving the process for requesting that a vote be counted, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 9 – Standing Vote 2 – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 2, Section 2.9 of its General By-laws, relative to Sense of Meeting, by striking the words "rising in their places for that purpose,"therein, thereby eliminating the requirement for voters to stand, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 10 – Special Town Meeting Quorum Increase – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend Article 2, Section 2.1 of its General By-laws, relative to Quorum Requirements, by striking the words "ten (10)" and inserting in place thereof the words "twenty-five (25)", thereby increasing the quorum required for a special town meeting from 10 to 25, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Margaret motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 6 through article 10, seconded by Katie. Vote was unanimous.

Article 11 – Finance Committee Appointed – Article 11 has been removed

Article 12 – Establish a By-Law Committee – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to establish a permanent By-Law Review Committee consisting of the Moderator, the Town Clerk or designee, a member of the Board of Selectmen chosen by that Board, a member of the Finance Committee chosen by that Committee, a member of the Planning Board chosen by that Board, the Town Administrator, and one resident from each precinct, to be appointed by the Moderator, which committee shall be subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law; and charge this committee with conducting periodic reviews of the Town's by-laws no less than every five years or more frequently as may be requested by vote of Town Meeting, and for making recommendations to _____ for additions, deletions, or amendments thereto as may from time to time seem advisable to it, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Christine motioned to not recommend article 12, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 13 – Purchase of new Riding Lawn Mower for Highway Department – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Eleven Thousand Six Hundred Ten Dollars and Thirty Cents (\$11,610.30) to purchase a new riding lawn mower for use by the Highway Department, including any costs incidental or related thereto, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Kent motioned to recommend approval of article 13, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 15 – Funding for Union Contracts for Firefighters Association – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$49,094.00 to fund and implement the first year cost items contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Freetown Full-Time

Firefighters Association covering the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024 in the amounts and categories presented in the supplemental schedules, as on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto. – the funding source is the tax levy.

Kent motioned to recommend approval of article 15, seconded by Katie. Vote was unanimous.

Article 14 – Funding for Union Contracts for Dispatchers – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$ _____ to fund and implement the first year cost items contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Public Employees Union, Local 1144, LIUNA covering the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024 in the amounts and categories presented in the supplemental schedules, as on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 16 – Funding for Union Contracts for Clerical Union – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$ _____ to fund and implement the first year cost items contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Freetown Public Employees' Union, Local 1144, LIUNA Clerical Union covering the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024, as on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 17 - Funding for Union Contracts for Freetown Highway Union – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$ _____ to fund and implement the first year cost items contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Freetown Highway Department, Local 1144 covering the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024, as on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Article 18 - Funding for Union Contracts for Police Association – To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds the sum of \$ _____ to fund and implement the first year cost items contained in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Town of Freetown and Freetown Police Association covering the period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024 in the amounts and categories presented in the supplemental schedules, as on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Presently, the Finance Committee is taking no action on article 14, 16, 17 & 18.

Article 19 – Supplemental Department Expense Budgets – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$65,459 from the appropriation made by the vote taken under Article 1 of the June 7, 2021 Annual Town Meeting for the Old Colony Voc. Ed. Transportation in the amount of \$193,228 as part of the Omnibus for the purpose of supplementing the departmental expense budgets for the items as listed below:

Transportation of students to Bristol Plymouth Vocational High School \$ 41,859

Insurance:

Property & Casualty Insurance \$ 16,000

Workers Compensation Insurance \$ 5,600

General Liability Insurance \$ 2,000

And/or take any action relative thereto.

Katie motioned to recommend approval of article 19, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 20 – Supplementing the Department Personnel Budgets – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of \$39,011, from the appropriation made by the vote taken under Article 1 of the June 7, 2021 Annual Town Meeting for the Old Colony Voc. Ed. Transportation in the amount of \$193,228 as part of the Omnibus Budget for the purpose of supplementing the departmental personnel budgets, due to pay rate increases, new stipends, and first year costs of new negotiated employment contracts, for the items listed below:

Public Health Nurse \$ 1,440

Annual Town Report Preparer Stipend \$ 1,000

Town Accountant \$ 10,800

Treasurer/Collector \$ 10,900

Police Chief

\$ 14,871

- And/or take any action relative thereto. There was a brief discussion about this article.

Christine motioned to recommend approval of article 20, seconded by Kent. After some discussion the vote was unanimous.

Article 21 – Zoning By-Law change to allow Veterinary office in Village Business District – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Freetown Protective By-laws, Article 11 Zoning By-laws by changing Section 11.18 H. 1. Table of Use Regulations to allow Veterinary office and animal sales by Special Permit in the Village Business District.

Christine motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 21, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 22 – Measurer of Wood, Bark and Lumber – Motion: To see if the Town will approve having two Board of Selectmen appointed Measurer of Wood, Bark and Lumber appointed yearly by the Board of Selectmen.

Emily motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 22, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 23 – Highway Surveyor Salary Increase – Motion: To see if the Town will vote in accordance with General Laws Chapter 41, Section 108, to amend the salary of the Highway Surveyor for Fiscal Year 2022 from \$72,688.00 to \$74,152.00, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,464.00 for the purpose of funding said increase, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Christine motioned to recommend approval of article 23, seconded by Katie. Vote was unanimous.

Article 24 – CONEX storage boxes for Highway and Fire Department – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Twenty-eight Thousand Dollars (\$28,000.00) to purchase three CONEX storage boxes for use by the Highway and Fire departments, including any costs incidental or related thereto, and/or take any action relative thereto. – There was a brief discussion about this article.

Margaret motioned to recommend approval of article 24, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 25 – Parcel of Land from Board of Selectmen to Conservation Commission – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the care, custody, management, and control of that parcel of vacant land identified as Lot 10 on Assessors' Map 221 (being 8.74 acres of land on Middleboro Road and Long Pond, south of the State Boat Ramp) from the Board of Selectmen or Tax Title Custodian, for general municipal purposes or tax title purposes for which said property is held, to the Conservation Commission under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 8C, and further to dedicate and designate the parcel for conservation purposes subject to the protections of Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts Constitution, and/or take any action relative thereto. There was a brief discussion about this article and whether or not there are any financial issues with this article.

Kent motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 25, seconded by Katie. Vote was unanimous.

Article 26 – Amendment of Town and Freetown Zoning Map – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Freetown Zoning Map by adopting those changes outlined on a list on file with the Town Clerk and further shown on a map on file with the Town Clerk, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Katie motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 26, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 27 – Water & Sewer Enterprise Supplement to General Fund – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to supplement the amount raised from Water-Sewer Enterprise Revenues for FY22, previously voted in Article 3 of the Annual Town Meeting on June 7, 2021 by the sum of Five Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Eight Dollars (\$5,778)

to be allocated to the general fund for the purpose of funding increases in indirect costs previously appropriated in the Omnibus Budget, Article 1, of the Annual Town Meeting of June 7, 2021, or take any other action relative thereto.

Kent motioned to recommend approval of article 27, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 28 – Water & Sewer Commission becoming a Town Department vs. Enterprise Fund – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to rescind its votes taken under Article 28 of the Special Town Meeting held November 20, 2006; Article 29 of the Special Town Meeting held November 20, 2006; and Article 14 of the Annual Town Meeting held June 5, 2017; which votes established the Water Enterprise Fund, Sewer Enterprise Fund, and combined Water-Sewer Enterprise funds, and/or take any action relative thereto. Gary said that there will be a meeting on Monday, September 27 about this article, and there may be some more information after the meeting. There was some discussion about article 28, and it was decided that they could re-vote this article after the meeting, if they feel the need to do so.

Kent motioned to not recommend article 28, seconded by Margaret. Vote was unanimous.

Article 29 – Supplement to Board of Assessors and Health Insurance – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Eleven Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty-five Dollars (\$11,785.00) for the purpose of increasing the hours of the part-time clerical position with the Board of Assessors from 15 hours per week to 20 hours per week, with these funds allocated as follows: \$3,235.00 to be added to the budget for the Board of Assessors and \$8,550.00 to be added to the budget for Health Insurance, and/or take any action relative thereto. There was a discussion about this article.

Katie motioned to recommend approval of article 29, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 30 – Replacement Shed for Cemetery – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer available funds, the sum of \$_____ for the purpose of purchasing a replacement shed at the cemetery, including any costs incidental or related thereto, and/or take any action relative thereto. The funding source is Free Cash. There was an extensive discussion about this article and the revolving account of the Cemetery Department.

Margaret motioned to recommend approval of article 30, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.

Article 31 – Abolish the farm Animal Excise Tax – Motion: To see if the Town will vote in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 8A, to abolish the Farm Animal Excise tax, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Katie motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 31, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 32 – Air Conditioning at Town Hall – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of _____ (\$_____.) to upgrade the air conditioning system at the Town Hall, including design, engineering, and construction costs, and any costs incidental or related thereto, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Deferred until the meeting of the Finance Committee prior to Town Meeting.

Article 33 – Addition of funds to supplement the Tree Warden Budget - Motion: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds, the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to supplement the budget of the Tree Warden, and/or take any action relative thereto.

Kent motioned to recommend approval of article 33, seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous.

Article 34 – Authorize Board of Selectmen to appoint parking control officers – Motion: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 147, Sections 10F, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint parking control officers who shall have only those powers and duties conferred or imposed on police officers by M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 20A or 20A ½ or act in relation thereto.

Katie motioned to have no recommendation from the Finance Committee for article 34, seconded by Christine. Vote was unanimous.

Gary said the Finance Committee will have a brief meeting about 15 minutes prior to the Town Meeting, on October 18 at 7:00 PM. Katie said that she will not be able to be at the Town Meeting.

Emily motioned to adjourn at 6:52 PM, seconded by Kent. Vote was unanimous.