

TOWN OF FREETOWN

Finance Committee

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FREETOWN TOWN CLERK

2022 APR 19 AM 10:02

*Cheryl Calheta*

Minutes of

MEETING: 6:00 PM Thursday, March 24, 2022

Remote meeting via Zoom

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Chair Gary Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

*Pursuant to Governor Baker's February 15, 2022, Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, sec. 18, this meeting of the Freetown Finance Committee will be conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real-time, via technological means. A recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings will be posted to the Town's YouTube Channel and/or the Town of Freetown Website (freetownma.gov).*

Present: Chair Gary Martin, Emily-Anne Dors, Katie Calheta, Bob Alderson (6:03), Margaret French, Christine Dupras, Interim Town Administrator Deborah Pettey, and Kim Johnson, Recording Clerk.

Excused: Kent Wilkins.

1. Minutes from 3/2/22.

Bob motioned to accept the minutes from 3/2/22, as written, seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Christine Dupras – yes, Margaret French – yes, Emily-Anne Dors – yes, Bob Alderson – yes, Katie Calheta – abstain, and Gary Martin – yes. Vote was 5-0-1.

2. Reconsider the transfer request from Town Administration for \$12,562.00 from the Reserve Fund to Management Info Systems for information technology support services, internet expense, and professional/technical services. Discussion with Interim Town Administrator Deborah Pettey. – Gary said that the Finance Committee approved \$4,562.00 of this request at the last meeting. Deborah Pettey explained the need for the remaining request of \$8,000.00. She said that due to COVID, there was a lot of money spent on laptops and they each need a license. She said there was no cloud back up to the server or firewalls when she started, which led to more costs by buying them and having them installed. She said that basically the budget was exhausted very quickly. The funds that were approved at the last meeting paid for software and some software subscriptions. She said that there also is an outstanding bill for the outsourced IT person.

Bob asked what would happen if the whole \$8,000.00 was not used, and she said that it would go back to the general fund. There was some discussion about outsourcing IT compared to having an IT Department.

Bob motioned to approve \$8,000.00, for this particular article, seconded by Christine. Roll call vote: Christine Dupras – yes, Margaret French – yes, Emily-Anne Dors – yes, Bob Alderson – yes, Katie Calheta – yes, and Gary Martin – yes. Vote was 6-0-0.

3. Discussion with Interim Town Administrator Deborah Pettey about plans for the Boat Ramp and their financial implications. – Deborah said that the boat ramp is an ongoing project/problem. They have been discussing buying a kiosk for payments and they went to the State and got them to approve the fee increase on parking tickets from \$5.00 to \$10.00. They did ask to raise the price to \$15.00 and the State said no. She said the boat ramp runs in a deficit

because they must pay for police details and attendants. She said the payment kiosk will help during the week when there are no attendants so that they will be able to collect fees. It will also be more secure and will eliminate the need to have attendants for as many hours as they have in the past.

Deborah said that the kiosk would cost \$12,700.00. She said that the Selectmen have approved a \$13,000.00 transfer request, and there is about \$8,000.00 in the revolving fund to pay for the operating expenses. She is meeting with the rep. for the kiosk on Monday and she will ask about leasing options. She said she will be coming back with a transfer request. She hopes to get the boat ramp to start at least breaking even. There was some discussion on the kiosk, and Deborah said she would be asking questions about the concerns that the Finance Committee has when she meets with the rep. on Monday. There was also some discussion about security cameras at the boat ramp.

Gary said that the meeting dates that are coming up are: April 21, April 28, and May 5.

Bob motioned to adjourn at 6:42 PM, seconded by Christine. Roll call vote: Katie Calheta – yes, Margaret French – yes, Christine Dupras – yes, Bob Alderson – yes, Emily-Anne Dors – yes and Gary Martin – yes. Vote was unanimous. 6-0-0.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Johnson