Received Town of Freetown Town Clerk's Office
2021 FEB -2 A 7:48
Cheryl A. Estrella

Freetown Town Meeting Study Committee
Minutes of the Wednesday, January 13, 2021 Meeting
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Present: Cheryl Estrella, Paul Lubin, Trevor Matthews, Mike McCue, and Kent Wilkins.

Absent: Christine Dupras. There is also one vacancy, for a resident from Precinct II.

Call to order: Mike McCue called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m.

Opening Remarks
Mr. McCue welcomed and introduced the members – himself as Moderator, Kent Wilkins as resident from Precinct I, Paul Lubin as resident from Precinct III, Trevor Matthews representing the Board of Selectmen, Christine Dupras (absent) representing the Finance Committee, and Cheryl Estrella for the Town Clerk's office. The resident position from Precinct II is vacant. Mrs. Estrella confirmed that Mr. Matthews and Mrs. Dupras had not yet been sworn-in, and that she could not swear anyone in via Zoom.

Organization
Mr. McCue opened the floor for nominations for chairman. Mr. Lubin nominated Mr. McCue for chairman, seconded by Mrs. Estrella. Mr. McCue asked for any other nominations or volunteers, and there were none. As this was a virtual meeting, vote was then taken by roll call: Estrella – aye, Lubin – aye, Wilkins – aye, McCue – abstain, Matthews – unable to vote. Motion carries 3-0-1.

Mr. McCue asked if anyone was interested in being secretary. There were no nominations or volunteers, so the chairman will be tasked with taking minutes for the time being.

Purpose and Goals for the Committee
Mr. McCue outlined the charge of the committee, to review by-laws and procedures relevant to conducting town meetings and recommend any advisable changes. This may be by-laws that conflict with one another or improvements to local procedures. He also noted our by-laws require town meetings be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order except where the by-laws otherwise provide, and that some aspects of the conduct of the meetings are at the discretion of the Moderator. The committee's work is expected to be completed and recommendations made by the fall town meeting in 2021.

The floor was then opened for input. Mr. Lubin noted that sections of the by-laws were distributed prior to the meeting. Mr. McCue summarized that Articles 1 and 2 deal with elections and town meetings, portions of Article 3 discuss responsibilities of the selectmen and Town Administrator with regard to town meetings, and Article 4 discusses the Finance Committee. An example then given was the conflict between Article 3 and Article 4 as to who prepares the budget; while understood that the Town Administrator now is tasked with compiling the budget, the by-laws are still ambiguous in leaving the responsibility in both places. Brief additional discussion was held on responsibilities of the Finance Committee.

Mr. Lubin also provided the example of standing votes, which have morphed into hand-counted votes. Mr. McCue recalled that there was a meeting, possibly the fly ash meeting in 2001, where a standing vote was held, but one voter was unable to stand. Mr. Wilkins also felt this should be addressed and revised if a standing vote was specified.

Mr. Lubin suggested having members review specific articles and report their thoughts and observations at the next meeting. Consensus was to follow this path.

- Mr. Lubin offered to review Article 4, relative to the Finance Committee. Mr. Wilkins, as a former Finance Committee member, also was interested in reviewing Article 4. He added that Mrs. Dupras, as a current Finance Committee member, might also be interested in reviewing this article.

- Mrs. Estrella offered to review Article 1 ("Town Meeting").
- Mrs. Estrella and Mr. Matthews will review Article 3 ("Powers and Duties of Town Officers").
- Mr. McCue will review articles 1 and 2 ("Town Meeting" and "Procedure at Town Meeting").

Establish Meeting Schedule
Discussion ensued on how frequently to meet. Mrs. Estrella suggested returning in two weeks to see what was accomplished, and then planning out a meeting schedule from there. It was agreed to meet next on January 27th at 5:30 p.m.

Other Business Properly Before the Commission
Suggestion was made that Jackie Brown might be interested in representing Precinct II. Otherwise, there will still be a search to fill the vacancy.

Meeting Adjourned
A motion was made by Mrs. Estrella, seconded by Mr. Lubin, to adjourn. Vote was then taken by roll call: Estrella – aye, Lubin – aye, Wilkins – aye, McCue – aye, Matthews – unable to vote. Motion carries 4-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

This is a True Record by me.

Attest: _____
Michael T. McCue, Chairman