

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

Officials Present: Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill
Absent: Supervisor Randy Lester

Other Officials: Historian Lorna Spencer, Deputy Historian Sherry Bernard, Bookkeeper
Jessica Dart, and Constable Rob Harrington

Other:11

Meeting called to order at 7:03pm by led by Deputy Supervisor John Hill

I. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Led by Deputy Supervisor John Hill

**II. Deputy Supervisor John Hill congratulated Rob Morgan being elected
Town Council, filling Jolene Esposito seat. He will be starting January 1st.**

III. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Board Meeting– Monday, October 19, 2020

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to accept the Meeting Minutes as submitted.
Seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

IV. Sean Perry regarding the Historical Preservation: Sean stated that he had reached out to Supervisor Randy Lester and all the other Supervisor with Towns in the project area. Per the article 10 process the applicate is required to put up a set amount for offset funding to SHPO that is held in escrow for historical and cultural projects. This money can be used to repair, rehabilitate, restore, general maintenance of any historical or cultural sites as seen fits. It can be used to repair a historical building foundation that may have to be repaired. Historical residence or farms that may need paint or siding. The rate at \$117,000.00 a mega watt comes to about \$180,000.00 for the Town of Freedom. Once the project is declared operational then SHPO disperses the funds, they then can get contractors and do the projects that the Towns asked of them. Sean has list of historical sites that Invenergy identified in the pre application survey. The process is that they submit a culture mitigation plan to SHPO. This should be done over the course of the next few months. The Town Board should consult with the Town Historian and come up list of projects that they would like to see, and see done with them. One the Town has a list of projects they can have a public hearing or ask the Town residence to get their input. Then get the list to Sean and he will get that list to SHPO. Deputy Supervisor John Hill asked with the \$180,000.00, is that amount

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

strictly for the Town of Freedom. Shawn stated yes. SHPO is under no obligation to distribute these funds equally, it relies on the applicates use to SHPO. When Invenergy submits the MOU, they tell them that Freedom wants to do these projects, SHPO has the alternate say on how the funds are dispersed. They could say they don't think one project can be useful and would rather spend the money over here on a more useful project. Councilman Geoff Milks stated its money we should plan for, its hypothetical at this point until the project is at a certain level. Town Clerk Mindy Holland will have a list of the Historical Sites in Freedom for the public.

- A) Deputy Historian Sherry Bernard is asking the Town Board how much the Town Board would like to sell the Bicentennial Books for. Originally the Town sold them for \$15.00 then it went to \$10.00. She was wondering if it should be kept at \$10.00. The Board agreed to leave it at \$10.00. The Books are available in the Town Clerks office for purchase. Deputy Supervisor John Hill would like the Bicentennial books to be advertised on the Freedom Website.

Dustin Bliss made a motion to **close** the Board Meeting at 7:14 pm. Seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to **open** the Public Hearings on the 2021 Fire Contracts at 7:15 pm. Seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR THREE FIRE DISTRICT CONTRACTS

- A). PUBLIC HEARING – 2021 ARCADE FIRE CONTRACT
The 2021 Arcade Fire Contract amount will be \$52,486.00

Comments

Deputy Supervisor John Hill told the public the increase will be \$486.00.

No other comments

- B) PUBLIC HEARING – 2021-2022 DELEVAN FIRE CONTRACT

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

The 2-year Delevan Fire Contracts is up from previous years from \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year.

Comments

No comments

C.) PUBLIC HEARING - 2021 FARMERSVILLE FIRE CONTRACT
The 2021 Farmersville Fire Contract amount will be \$21,482.00

Comments

Deputy Supervisor John Hill told the public that the amount went down \$409.00

No other comments

A motion was made by John Hill to **close** the public hearings on the Fire Contracts at 7:17 pm. Motion seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Geoff Milks to **re-open** the board meeting at 7:19 p.m. Motion seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

VI. Vote on the Fire Contracts

A) A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to accept as reported by the Mayor of Arcade the **2021 Arcade Fire District Contract**. The motion was seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

B) A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to accept as written **the 2021-2022 Delevan Fire District Contract**. The motion as seconded by Geoff Milks

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

C) A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to accept as written the **2021 Farmerville Fire District Contract**. The motion was seconded by Geoff Milks.

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to **close** the board meeting at 7:19 p.m. Motion was seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to **open** the Public Hearing on the 2021 Town of Freedom Preliminary Budget at 7:20 p.m. Motion was seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

VII. PUBLIC HEARING -2021 PRELIMINARY BUDGET
2021 Town of Freedom Budget is up 1%

Comments

Joan Carlson- from the Senior Citizens, please see attached page with her letter to the Town Board.

Rick Lange asked what the Seniors budget is. Joan stated that is \$2,500.00 for the year. Rick suggested a go fund me campaign. Joan said no. Rick said he would contribute to some kind of fund raiser to help the Seniors.

Pat Doblewski stated that if the Town drops any support for the Seniors that they will never get it back. She said that when the economy is better in a year or two, she doubts the funding will come back. Once it drops its dropped. The Seniors group have been there for 30 years.

Dan Meyers asked how is the Budget looking for next year with Governor Cuomo cutting everything back. Does the Town have an idea of what we are getting or not getting?

Bookkeeper Jessica Dart stated that's a part of the problem, we don't know what we are getting. This year they cut our CHIPS 20%, the State says they are not going to do it next year, but in July of this year they told the Town that they wouldn't cut the CHIPS and then when the Town applied for CHIPs they cut the Town 20%. Dan asked if its 20% how are we able to cover that. Jessica stated that the Town ate it this year with what the Town had extra, but we can only do that for so long. Jessica said she can go a year or two but not much more then that with extra money the Town has. Dan is curious, the Town spends money on new equipment and he said it's nice to have new equipment for the workers, just now is not the time to be spending that money, save the money on the equipment for future needs. He understands that the employees need raises they are good workers, he feels the Town should be putting away more money just in case, so the tax payers don't have to eat it a couple of years from now. He stated that everyone thinks that

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

with these windmills we will get all this money, but with Cuomo in as Governor we may not get anything. He feels the Town should be saving more money then spending it. The

guys mowing the lawn with the John Deere tractor by Dans house, the guy took the tractor and slammed it into an old tree to knock it down, instead of mowing the grass.

The tractor is a couple years old is that why we need a new tractor because we don't know how to take care of them. If the money not there the Town should start saving for a rainy day. Jessica stated that the big trucks are on a 9-year rotation. She stated today there is a bill for almost \$7,000.00 for a fuel pump in the oldest truck. Dan asked if we have mechanics to work on them. Jess said we do to a certain point, but there are parts into it as well. Jessica said it use to be a 6-year rotation, due to finances the Town changed it to a 9-year rotation. Dan understands the rotation, but the Town needs a decent mechanic to keep maintenance on the trucks, instead of trading them in every couple of years. He can't understand why they trade the John Deere every other year. Deputy Supervisor John

Hill stated the Town Board is trying to be extremely fiscal on how they spend money. The cap was lowered from 2% to 1.56%. Jessica explained there is certain aspects of the taxes Town does not have control of, for example State retirement went up 13%, the Town has to pay that whether she likes it or not, but the Town can only raise the Budget 1.56%. Councilman Dustin Bliss stated that's why there have cuts in the Senior Program, completely got rid of the Youth Program. Councilman Geoff Milks stated that the cuts on the budget are tough cuts to make. Geoff stated as far as the Town equipment some of the rotation are well done. With the loader that was just purchased, Geoff called the Town of Farmersville, they just leased a loader that is the same size loader, their lease program is costing them a little more, half again what ours cost us, if you average out the yearly cost, for what the trade in is. Ours, came out to \$45,000.00 to upgrade and that's what they been doing for every so many years. It is cheaper than the lease payment Farmersville is paying for the same size loader. Geoff has a feeling there will be more cuts in the coming years.

Dustin stated it was not easy to do the budget this year, he stated that almost everyone that works for the Town wanted a raise. Not everyone got what they wanted. As for the Town Highway workers, they evaluated how much our guys are making compared to surrounding Towns. Dustin wanted to stay competitive with some of the surrounding Towns and the current labor market. We do have some guys coming up for retirement and they want to hire qualified individuals, that will respect the equipment. Dustin has no desire to have the highest payed highway department but he would like to be competitive.

John stated as for the Town Council no one got a raise on the Town Council, nor did the Clerk, the bulk of the raise went to the Highway Department. John said as far as the Seniors that was tough to, there was discussion back and forth between the Board Members. Some of the arguments that some of the Town Council made was that yes, we understand that the Seniors need to get together and see people, but we don't understand is we have several tax payers paying for meals for certain people. The rec program has been completely eliminated, that was a \$15,000.00 cut, it's a \$2,500.00 cut for the Seniors. The Board apologizes but the way things are going we don't have a choice in changing the budget around to make things work. John suggested what Rick Lange said a Go Fund me page for the Seniors. Something else the Seniors need to do is to make of list

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

of things for the Budget season next year, so the Board can see the expenses and not be paying for meals.

Dan Meyers asked how much money does the Seniors have right now. John stated he does not know.

Joan Carlson asked what is stopping these people from joining us, they are more then welcome, 55 years and up from Freedom.

Dustin stated that the discussion did not revolve from how many, or how few Seniors are involved. It was the fact that all the tax payers are paying for what is deemed a social club for a handful. He said it would not matter if there are a 100 people in the Seniors club. Joan asked if he is against the Food Pantry, the lighting contest... Dustin stated there is nothing stopping anyone in the Town from doing any of those things. You can still do them things whether or not your funded. Joan stated then we have to individually fund it. Joan said that they donate to the food pantry three times a year and they give a \$100.00. Dustin stated that they can still do them things. Joan stated that they are paying out of pocket and the Town will not help them. There is about \$3,000.00 in the Senior Funds. Dan Meyers stated that the Seniors don't need any money next year. Joan wanted a compromise. She asked if the Town is not giving money is it null and void for the lighting contest. Dustin stated yeah, I guess. Lyle Morgan stated that the Pioneer Seniors usually get \$800.00 a year and they got nothing this year, and they have as many Seniors as Freedom does in their program. Dustin stated he not trying to be cold its just that looking at the Town Budget, looking at every line item there has to be a clear distinction of this is the amount of many the tax payers contribute to X project and this is what the Town gets. The Senior program is a program where we spending X amount of dollars and there is no clear-cut benefit that the tax payers are getting for the money we are spending. The Town Board is saying that anyone in the Town, whether it be a Senior Citizen or not, conduct community service, or donate their time. The Seniors can still use the Town Hall to get together for the pot luck dinner. Dustin stated the Town Tax Payers will not be paying for anyone in the Town whether it's a Senior Citizen or not a Senior Citizen to go out to lunch on the Town Tax Payers money. Dustin that may seem cold but there is a lot of people in this Town who have a hard time putting food on the table, not just Seniors and for Town Tax payers paying for some people go out to eat it's a dereliction duty of a Town Board Member. Rick Lange stated that the Seniors need someone who can organizer a fund raiser and organize a go fund me.

A motion was made by John Hill to **close** the public hearing at 7:42 p.m. on the 2021 Preliminary Budget. Motion seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to **re-open** the Regular Board meeting 7:42 p.m. Motion was seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

VIII. VOTE ON THE 2021 Annual TOWN BUDGET

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to approve the 2021 Annual Town Budget. Motion was seconded by John Hill.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by Dustin Bliss to close the regular board meeting at 7:43p.m. Seconded by Geoff Milks

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

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A motion was made by John Hill to open the public hearing on the variance at 10007 Blue Street at 7:43p.m. Seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

Phay Van Phommatha would like to erect a 30 foot by 32-foot garage attached to his modular house. It is within 4 Feet of the lot line. Town Law is that any structure needs to be at least 10 feet from the property line.

Comments

Deputy Supervisor John Hill read a letter from the neighbor of the property Robin Wheeler; in the letter it states that on 10/2/2020 she gives permission for Phommatha Phay Van to build his garage only four feet from my property line. I feel my buildings are far enough away from his for emergency and safety purposes.

John asked how far away is her buildings from the property line. The gentleman speaking on behave of the property owner stated that is 170 feet from her buildings.

Town Clerk Mindy Holland explained that the Town Board can have the public hearing tonight but cannot vote on the variance. They have to wait for the variance to come back from the County Planning Board approved. If the County Planning Board does not approve it will come back to the Town

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

Planning Board for revision. If this is the case then the Town Planning Board will have to revise and resubmit to the County Planning Board, also the Town Board will have to have a Public hearing again. If it gets approved by the County Planning Board, then at the next Town Board meeting in December the Town Board can say yay or nay to it.

John Hill wanted on record that there are no objections during the public hearing for erecting the garage.

A motion was made by John Hill to close the public Hearing on the Variance at 10007 Blue Street at 7:48 p.m. Seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

A motion was made by John Hill to **re-open** the regular board meeting at 7:49p.m. Seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

IX. TOWN OF FREEDOM

RESOLUTION # 31-2020

November 16, 2020

A resolution authorizing the Records Management Officer to dispose of certain records.

Whereas:

The State of New York Education Department has established a Disposition Schedule for Archives Records Retention identified as Schedule MU-1, which is a guideline for the disposal of certain records, and

Whereas:

Said Schedule MU-1 identifies the following records of the Town of Freedom as being disposable;

1. Outdated W-4's - 1996-2004

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

2. Payroll Duplicates – 2001-2013
3. Quarterly 941's – 1998-2013
4. W-2's & W-3's – 1998-2013
5. Supervisor Banking (includes VOID checks, transfers, stubs, statements & reconciliations) – 2009-2013
6. Town Clerk Banking (includes VOID checks, transfers, stubs, statements & reconciliations) – 2011-2013
7. Accessible Parking Permits – 2009-2010
8. Insurance Policies - 2008-2013
9. Tax Receipts, Daily Collection Reports, Splits and Tax Address Changes – 2011-2013
10. Expired Special Use Permits (Gravel Pits) – 1989-2014

Whereas:

The Records Management Officer of the Town of Freedom has identified the aforementioned documents to be available for disposal

Be it Resolved that:

The Town Board of the Town of Freedom does hereby authorize the Records Management Officer to dispose of the previously identified records in accordance with accepted practices.

Motion by: Geoff Milks, Seconded by Dustin Bliss

Roll call:

Dustin Bliss: Aye

Geoff Milks: Aye

John Hill: Aye

Supervisor Randy Lester: Absent

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

Clerk: *[Signature]* Date: 11/16/2020

X. TOWN OF FREEDOM

RESOLUTION #32-2020
2020

November 16,

A Resolution Transferring Funds

The Town Board of the Town of Freedom, pursuant to Town Law Section 112, Paragraph 1 wishes to:

Transfer funds from:

Buildings Savings Account in the amount of \$3342.43

To:

A1110.4 (Justice Contractual Expenditures) to cover the costs incurred on the purchase of a replacement desk for the Justice office. This amount will be reflected in general voucher #226 of 2020.

Motion by: Dustin Bliss, Seconded by Geoff Milks

Roll call:

Bliss: Aye

Hill: Aye

Milks: Aye

Lester: Absent

Clerk: *[Signature]* Date: 11/16/2020

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

XI. TOWN OF FREEDOM

RESOLUTION # 33-2020

November 16, 2020

A Resolution transferring funds from Archives Grant Fund.

The Town Board of the Town of Freedom, in compliance with Resolution #13-2019 and pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 6-c, wishes to;

Transfer funds from:

Archives Grant Fund Account in the amount of \$1,297.50

To: A1460.1 (Records Management Personal Services) to cover the initial cost incurred while preparing records to be scanned, as set forth in our grant from the State of New York.

Motion by: John Hill, Seconded by Dustin Bliss

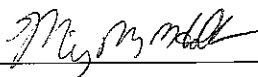
Roll call:

Bliss: Aye

Hill: Aye

Milks: Aye

Lester: Absent

Clerk:  Date: 11/16/2020

XII. NEW BUSINESS:

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

1.) YEAR END MEETING

A motion was made by John Hill to have the year-end meeting on December 28, 2020 at 7 pm. Seconded by Dustin Bliss

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

2.) REORGANIZATION MEETING

A motion was made by John Hill to have the reorganization meeting on January 4th 2021 at 7pm. Seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll Call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS: No Public Comments

XIV. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS :

- A) Assessors – Report Submitted
- B) Building Committee –
- C) Building Inspector – Report Submitted
- D) Highway Superintendent -Report Submitted
- E) Clerk/Collector - Report submitted
- ALSO NOTE: The Town Clerks and Building Inspector Office will be closed for the Thanksgiving weekend November 26, 27, & 28.
- F) Constable –
- G) DCO –
- H) Highway Committee –
- I) Insurance Committee-
- J) Justices –
- K) Parks & Recreation –
- L) Planning Board – Report submitted
- M) Supervisor –Report Submitted
- N) Other Town Officials –

A motion to accept the reports & communications as submitted was made by Geoff Milks. Seconded by Dustin Bliss.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

XV. APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

General #226 to # 252, Amt. \$80,201.23, Yrly Amt. \$269,906.36.

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting/ Public Hearing
November 16, 2020

Motion made by Dustin Bliss to accept the General vouchers as written.
Seconded by Geoff Milks.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

Highway # 122 to #131, Amt. \$39,426.27, Yrly Amt. \$ 424,236.90.

Motion made by Dustin Bliss to accept the Highway vouchers as written.
Seconded by Geoff Milks.

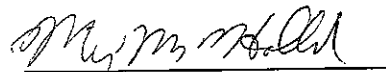
Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

XVI. ADJOURNMENT:

Geoff Milks made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 pm. Seconded by
Dustin Bliss.

Roll call: Ayes-3 Dustin Bliss, Geoff Milks, and Deputy Supervisor John Hill

Respectfully Submitted By



Freedom Town Clerk

11/20/2020

Town board meeting.

I am Joan Carlson and I am with the Freedom seniors. I would like you to reconsider about not giving us any money next year for our recreation program.

Unfortunately the main activity for most seniors is an outing to see the doctor or have a test done. We need something fun to look forward to and getting together and with other seniors is the highlight of our month. It has been even harder with the covid.

We have several seniors that live alone and have no family nearby so we are their family and support. We are limited in how far we can walk or how long we can even stand so we have that working against us when it comes to doing trips it is hard for most of us to even drive very far. Doing a bus trip is very expensive. We do try to do one special thing each year we have been to Chautauqua Lake for two cruises, the National comedy center, LeRoy for the Jell-O museum, Eden for the Kazoo and several other places.

The easiest thing for us to do is eat and we do try and support the local business and they all need all the support we can give them They have thanked us over and over for supporting them. We meet twice a month. We bring a dish to pass and have a short meeting on the first Wed and the second we go and do something.

In May we have had someone from the school come and update us on the budget. Last year we had a sheriff come and tell us about scams and there are a lot of them out there aimed at seniors. We have had the zoo mobile come and show us the birds and animals. We have someone come in Nov and sing.

Last week we went to the VFW for our Thanksgiving dinner and for some of us, that will be our Thanksgiving dinner. We also donate to the food pantry. Three times a year we bring nonperishable food and in Dec we give them a check for hams for Christmas We have decorated the town greens and had plans to buy a burning bush for the small park. We also collect gifts for the nursing home. I had just placed an order with Denise Desserts for cookies for the post office but once I heard we may not be getting money next year I canceled the order. If we get good news that you will still support us, then I can place the order again. The cookies are for the residents of Freedom and Sandusky that use the post office. We also do the Christmas lighting contest each year. When we were first given the money, we were asked to take that over from the town. If we don't get any money, does that mean that the town will take it over or will I that be discontinued? We try very hard to support the community and I don't think the kids do anything to help. We also pay taxes, something else the kids don't do.

So please, can we compromise and at least give us some money for next year so we will have something to look forward to. We don't need the full amount but we do need something.

Instead of judging and complaining about what we do, why don't the seniors that live in Freedom and are over 55 come and join us and try and support the town?