

MINUTES
FREEPORT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING #25-23
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 30 MAIN STREET, FREEPORT
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023
6:00 PM

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Councilor Chair Daniel Piltch, 25 Quarry Lane	X		
Council Vice Chair, John Egan, 38 Curtis Road	X		
Councilor Matthew Pillsbury, 36 Todd Brook Rd	X		
Councilor Chip Lawrence, 93 Hunter Road	X		
Councilor Darrel Fournier, 3 Fournier Drive	X		
Councilor Jake Daniele, 264 Pownal Road	X		
Councilor Edward Bradley, 242 Flying Point Road	X		

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS: Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS: Town Manager's Report (15 minutes)

Reminder of extra Town Council Workshops in November. These will be hybrid meetings Tuesday, November 21, 2023 Workshop at Town Hall is to discuss the property at 22 Main Street and get public feedback on whether to purchase the lot at a discounted price and what kind of uses might be potentially appropriate.

Tuesday, November 28, 2023 Workshop at Town Hall to discuss some proposed changes Coastal Waters Commission brought forward pertaining to moorings, mooring ordinance and mooring fees.

In early December we will welcome our new Town Manager, Sophie Wilson. We will be setting up a schedule to onboard her to have meetings with groups, current and recent former Councilors and she'll be doing tours of Municipal Facilities.

Tonight is one of two community workshops at the Freeport Community Library to get public feedback in regard to the Climate Action Planning process. The meeting starts at is 6 -8 pm tonight. There is also a Saturday schedule. All the details are on the website on the Town meeting calendar.

With the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday the municipal building will be closing at 2 pm on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Non-essential services will be closed on Thursday and Friday. Any buildings normally open on Saturday will resume normal operations then.

Judy Hawley, HR Director, has been busy with interviews this week.

The first interviews were for a Community Engagement Coordinator which is a new position that the Council funded. It will be in the Manager's Department. We've also done interviews for Deputy Fire Chief and for Police Officers. We still have urgent need for people in Fire Rescue and Public Works, we are down plow drivers.

Councilor Fournier: Have we ever looked at hiring part-time plow truck drivers? The Town Manager doesn't think so but at this point they would consider anything.

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Councilor Bradley: Wanted to thank Caroline for her gracious thanks she gave Councilor Daniele and himself for serving on the Council. It was a privilege to serve the last three years. He gave thanks for his time on the Council and especially to Jake for turning his microphone on.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS: To take action on the following items of business as read by the Council Chairperson:

ITEM # 207-23: That the Town Clerk report on the returns of the November 7, 2023 Election.

TOWN CANDIDATE BALLOT: Elected

Town Councilor-At Large: Joanna Benoit

Town Councilor District 2: Eric Smith

Town Councilor District 3: Matthew Pillsbury

RSU Board of Directors: Carolyn Jensen and Cheyenne Farrell

Sewer District Trustees: Chad Coffin and Timothy Whitacre

Water District Trustee: Write in winner/accepted-Tais De Los Reyes

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VOTERS: opening- 7,802

OF REGISTRATION CARDS HANDLED BY THE REGISTRAR ON ELECTION DAY (NEW VOTERS & CHANGE OF ADDRESS, NAME, OR PARTY) – 83

TOTAL NUMBER OF BALLOTS CAST – 3,572 (based on State ballots casts)

PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS WHO CAST BALLOTS – 45%

OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS REQUESTED – 1,110

RETURNED AND ACCEPTED – 1,047

PERCENT OF VOTES CAST BY ABSENTEE - 31%

The Town Clerk gave a brief summary of Election Day. It was an uneventful, yet busy Election Day. There were several candidates who greeted voters all day long, waiting to see the final tapes posted at the end of a very long day. The League of Women Voters sent a poll watcher to observe the process. She asked great questions and saw no irregularities. And as with most elections there were petitioners gathering signatures and sales in the FPAC hallway. They welcomed few new election clerks to the roster along with Barbara Harvey as one of our new Wardens.

Election Day is a long day and there was an error on the number of write ins listed for RSU Board of Trustees. The Clerk's tired eyes read the Sewer Trustee write in line and transposed it to the RSU write in line. It is for just that reason that any numbers that are posted on Election night are unofficial. The morning following Election, the Clerk does a complete and comprehensive review of all the tapes and total sheets from the night before. It is here that they catch any mathematic errors or transposed lines. This is a necessary piece of the election process so that we are assured that when they post the official results they are 100% accurate. In follow up to questions, the Clerk posted online the election tapes for review and will only post results clearly watermarked as Unofficial or Official following all elections.

MOTION: That the Town Clerk's report be accepted. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Piltch & Lawrence)**VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

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(Town Clerk, Christine Wolfe)(5 minutes)

The Town Clerk swore in new Council members.

<u>ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Daniel Piltch, 25 Quarry Lane	X	
John Egan, 38 Curtis Road	X	
Lawrence, Henry 93 Hunter Road	X	
Fournier, Darrel, 3 Fournier Drive	X	
Pillsbury, Matthew, 36 Todd Brook Road	X	
Eric Smith, 1464 US Route One	X	
Joanna Benoit, 1038 US Route One	X	

Chair Piltch gave a brief gracious presentation about Councilor Bradley's time on the Council thanking him for his time, knowledge and helpful input. Also thanking him and highlighting his accomplishments was Councilor Pillsbury, Councilor Fournier, Councilor Lawrence, Councilor Benoit, Councilor Smith and Councilor Egan. Chair Piltch presented him with a commemorative plaque and gift.

Chair Piltch also gave a glowing goodbye to Councilor Daniele and highlighted his good qualities that helped the Council. Councilor Pillsbury, Councilor Lawrence and Councilor Fournier also thanked him and encouraged him to stay engaged. The new Councilors also thanked him and welcomed his input. Councilor Egan gave him credit for the new bridges under construction in Freeport. The Chair also presented him with a commemorative plaque and gift.

ITEM # 208-23 To consider action relative to the electing of a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson for the Town Council.

MOTION: That the nominations for the position of Council Chairperson be opened. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Piltch & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes)(0-Nays)

Councilor Piltch: We have a new Town Manager coming on board and it's important to offer some consistency and stability and give that Town Manager a place to walk into with and some experience with how things have been run so there's not as much disruption on the Town's behalf. Councilor Piltch nominated Councilor Egan since he has a good deal of that experience and has been involved with Council leadership.

MOTION: That the nominations for the position of Council Chairperson be closed. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Piltch & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes) (0-Nays)

Note: If more than one nominee, a showing of hands will determine the name for the following order.

BE IT ORDERED: That Council John Egan be elected Chairperson of the Town Council. (Piltch & Lawrence)(6-Ayes)(0-Nays) (1-Abstain Egan)

MOTION: That the nominations for the position of Council Vice-Chairperson be opened. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Piltch & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (7-Ayes) (0-Nays)

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Councilor Egan nominated Councilor Piltch.

MOTION: That the nominations for the position of Council Vice-Chairperson be closed. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Piltch & Pillsbury)
VOTE: (7-Ayes) (0-Nays)

Note: If more than one nominee, a showing of hands will determine the name for the following order.

BE IT ORDERED: That Councilor Dan Piltch be elected Vice-Chairperson of the Town Council. **MOVED AND SECONDED** (Egan & Lawrence) **VOTE:** (6-Ayes)(0-Nays) (1-Abstain Piltch)
(Town Council) (15 minutes)

END OF AGENDA (Estimated time of adjournment 7:00 PM)