

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2026

Board Members Present: S.R.Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler

Absent: Josh Aarum

Other Officials: Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty

Others: 3

Note: Town Clerk was absent till 8:00pm from meeting.

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Supervisor Josh Cutler

I. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Led by Supervisor Josh Cutler

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

A) Regular Board Meeting minutes from Monday May 18, 2026

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to accept the meeting minutes as submitted.
Seconded by Denise Willard.

Roll Call: Ayes-4 S.R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler

.....
III.) TOWN OF FREEDOM

RESOLUTION #6-2026

June 15, 2026

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:

Highway Equipment Savings Account in the amount of \$54,774.50

To: DA5130.4 (Machinery – Contractual Expenditures) to cover Highway
Vouchers #56 to cover the cost of the purchase of the 2026 Dodge Pickup after
trade-in as previously approved at the April 2026 Board Meeting.

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

Roll call:

Morgan: Aye

Higgins: Aye

Aarum: Absent

Willard: Aye

Cutler: Aye

Clerk: Willard Date: 06/15/2026

IV.) OLD BUSINESS:

A.) **Data Center Moratorium:** Councilman R. Nick Morgan shared a rough draft to the board on a moratorium on data centers. He feels it would be a good idea to have one to protect the community. There is a lot of concern about the water and power infrastructure. Supervisor Josh Cutler said the Planning Board is looking into a Data Center Moratorium. The board will table this and wait for the planning board to get them a draft.

B.) **Social Media Policy:** Councilman R. Nick Morgan told the board the Town Attorney shared a copy of the Social Media policy with them. Nick explained that there are two different versions of the policy. One would allow commenting and one would not allow commenting. Councilwoman Denise Willard is for the version without commenting. Councilman S.R. Cory Higgins said that there should be something to allow concerns, but there needs to be rules for engagement. The comments should be made to be seen by the board. Also, it should not be on a platform like Facebook. Denise stated the problem with social media is that people have no problem saying something from behind their keyboards, but they don't come to board meetings. Supervisor Josh Cutler said that this was brought up to keep the public informed in town. Nick said also to protect ourselves as well. Cory stated that with the projects going on in town, we need to get notification from the board to the community. Nick told the board that this social media policy comment would be viewed by the board not by the public. Denise asked who would be in charge of this. Nick said Councilman Josh Aarum would be in charge, also because of his expertise with video. Cory said if they are opening comments from the public, any direct response should either be the Supervisor or the body of the board. Supervisor Josh Cutler noted that Nick and himself are working on getting the complaint form on the town's webpage.

C.) **Surveys for Town Green and Town Park:** Supervisor Josh Cutler told the board he did investigate getting all the areas surveyed and it would cost

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

\$2600.00 to survey them all. The survey company is Mariotti Surveying from Wellsville.

V.) NEW BUSINESS:

A.) Defibrillator: Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins will get a hold of the County through Emergency Services to price out defibrillator and see if someone could do a course of first aid and CPR for the Highway Department. Supervisor Josh Cutler said we should have two available.

B.) Randy Lester Resignation from Grievance Board Review: Councilmember R. Nick Morgan asked if they could bundle the advertisement for later in the year for a new member. The board decided to advertise in the fall around October.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to accept Randy Lester resignation from the Grievance Board. Seconded by Denise Willard.

Roll Call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

1.) Councilwoman Denise Willard stated that she never received her assessment from the Assessors. Supervisor Josh Cutler said it's because the board told the assessors not to change the assessment. Josh also stated that the only individuals that got a change in their assessment was people who made changes to their properties or sold properties.

C.) Assessor's email regarding the Veterans Exemption for 2026: The board discussed the email. They would like to pass this by law and it would start January 1, 2028. The understanding of this law would be for a veteran that has a disability that was caused by the service. Supervisor Josh Cutler will contact the Assessor's to see if they will be passing this law and if they have a template for the town to follow.

D.) August meeting: Due to the fair schedule this year, and with most involved with agriculture, it is recommended to move the August meeting to the 24th:

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to change the August meeting to August 24th at 7:00pm. Seconded by Denise Willard.

Roll Call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

E.) Road Closer: Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty told the board that Osmun Rd from Freedom to Baird Rd will be closed for about 40 days, local traffic only. They will be resealing the road with the same material they used on Cheeseman Hill Rd. Jim said that they will be doing two sections of the road. The first will be from Freedom Rd to Moore rd. Then they will be paving from John Borer first driveway to Baird Rd. Then this will have to sit for 20 days before it can withhold traffic. Then they will be doing the center section. John Borer agreed to go Osmun to Baird rd. to get out with the farm equipment. The dates will be July 14 or 15, weather permitting. Jim would like it posted in the paper from July 12 to the first of September that Osmun will be closed, local traffic only. After discussion of Cheeseman Hill RD and how some driveways are already crumbling Councilman R. Nick Morgan asked if they should do concrete apron on Borer's driveways. Jim said he has to talk to the salesman from Midland, because he stated that this topping should hold better because Borers already has a concrete apron.

F.) Letter from DEC: Supervisor Josh Cutler read an email that came from the DEC discussing that they want to buy small parcels for fishing rights and parking along Elton Creek. The board needs to comment within 90 days and if they do not the DEC will assume that there are no objections and will proceed with the proposal. Councilman R. Nick Morgan said he has no problem with them proposed areas, he would like to see a map of the areas to make sure it's not impacting traffic.

G.) Cattaraugus County Invite for the Planning Board Meeting:

Councilwoman Denise Willard asked if the board got their invite to the meeting and dinner at the Cattaraugus County Historical Museum. If any board members are going, they will have to let Town Clerk Mindy Holland know to RSVP them with the County.

VI). Public Comment:

Mr. Jeff Mason: Jeff told the board that he came as the historian for the American Legion Post in Arcade and on the behave of the Legion Family, that includes the Legion post, Auxiliary, and the Sons of the American Legion. Jeff said that they have a list of 9 Veterans that are close to Arcade, but also Freedom because their Post put the flags in the 6 cemeteries in Freedom. Daniel F. Bakeman, who is buried in the Sandusky Cemetery, was born in New Jersey. When he was a child, his family moved to the Mohawk Valley and his service was held there during the Revolution. He and his wife had several children. Later in life he moved to the Town of Arcade to Bray RD, between Sparks RD and Hiram Rd, closer to Hiram Rd. Jeff said as Daniel and his wife got older, they moved across the road to the Town of Freedom closer to Sparks Rd. They spent the rest of their lives at that home. Daniel and his wife are buried in the Sandusky Cemetery. Jeff said Arcade and Freedom can claim him. Also, what's notable about him other than being a Revolutionary Veteran, he applied for a pension, he did not have good proof of his

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

service to get in on the original pensions. When Daniel got much older, Congress had approved some special pensions. Jeff said there maybe a few other places in the United State that claim they have the last one, but the Legion is pretty sure that Daniel is the last of the Revolutionary to collect a pension. Jeff stated that he lived to 109 years old and Daniel's wife lived to 105 years. They had been married for 81 years. Both Daniel and his wife are buried in Sandusky Cemetery. Jeff said over a 100 years ago the Daughters of the American Revolution did an observance for him. In 1976 for the Bicentennial the Sons of the American Revolution did a special Daniel Bakeman day in the Sandusky Cemetery. The main speaker that day was Jack Kemp who was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. Jeff said that the committee wants to make sure Daniel is recognized this year. The Auxiliary has purchased flag holders for Revolution Veterans and also a set of 13-star flags. The Legion has set a date to recognize Daniel Bakeman on June 29th at 7pm for a short service in the Sandusky Cemetery. Jeff would like to know if some of the board or all of the board would like to attend. Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins asked Jeff if Daniel has two stones or is there two Revolutionary Veterans Buried in the Sandusky Cemetery? Jeff said that Daniel has a real old stone and behind it there is a newer stone. Jeff is not sure if that was put there by the DAR or the SAR or the Veterans administration at some point. Cory pointed out that there is a Veteran in the Sandusky Cemetery that fought in Gettysburg. Cory asked if Jeff knew the amount the pension was for Daniel. Jeff stated it was \$500 a year.

Gary Chamberlain: Gary asked if any thing being done about the speed on Eagle Street. Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins said he has contacted the Deputy that patrols this area. Gary said he can only patrol once a week. Cory said if Gary does not see anyone to let him know. Gary said the speeding is getting worse. Cory will make a call to try to get something done.

VII.) REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS:

- A) Assessors – Reports Submitted:
- B) Building Committee –
- C) Building Inspector –Reports Submitted:
- D) Highway Superintendent – Report Submitted:
- E) Clerk/Collector – Reports Submitted –
- F) Constable –
- G) DCO-
- H) Highway Committee –
- I) Insurance Committee-
- J) Justices –
- K) Parks & Recreation –
- L) Planning Board –
- M) Supervisor – Report submitted:
- N) Other Town Officials – **Wendel Group Reports from 05/14/2026-6/4/2026**

A motion to accept the reports & communications as submitted was made by Josh Cutler. Seconded by Denise Willard.

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

**Roll call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

VIII). APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

General #133 to # 157, Amt. \$27,630.56, Yrly Amt. \$170,610.37.

**Motion made by Josh Cutler to accept the General vouchers as written.
Seconded by Denise Willard.**

**Roll call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

Highway #56 to #65, Amt. \$333,867.45, Yrly Amt. \$560,606.07.

**Motion made by Denise Willard to accept the Highway vouchers as
written. Seconded by Josh Cutler.**

**Roll call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

Lighting District #6 to #6, Amt.\$360.81, Yrly Amt.\$2427.98.

**Motion made by Josh Cutler to accept the Lighting District vouchers as
submitted. Seconded by Denise Willard.**

**Roll Call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

IX.). Executive Session for employee matters:

**A motion was made by Josh Cutler to close the regular board meeting and open
executive session at 7:49pm. Seconded by R. Nick Morgan.**

**Roll Call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

**A motion was made by Josh Cutler to close the executive session and open the
regular board meeting at 8:41pm. Seconded by Denise Willard.**

**Roll Call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler**

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

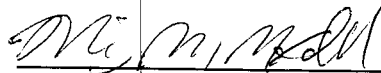
X.) Employee Handbook: Jill Davidson from Sheridan HR will review the town's employee handbook. Supervisor Josh Culter also stated they will be talking to the attorney about an employee matter.

XI.) Revolutionary War Flag: Councilman R. Nick Morgan asked if the town should get a Revolutionary flag to be hung at the cemetery. Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins said it be nice if the town could celebrate this, make this more the Town of Freedom event. Cory would like to do something to draw the community together. Nick knows a gentleman who made a Civil War mortar, and he was thinking of having him come over and fire it off in the back field. The board decided to purchase 4 of the 13-star flags for the 250 celebrate. The board also would like to put the flag donated by Tom Eric that hangs in the town hall on the building at the Sandusky Cemetery for the ceremony.

XII.) ADJOURNMENT: Josh Cutler made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. Seconded by Cory Higgins.

Roll call: Ayes-4 S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard,
& Supervisor Josh Cutler

Respectfully Submitted By,



Mindy M Holland

06/22/2026