

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 24, 2026

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

Other Officials: Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty

Others:3

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

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

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Town Board Meeting Minutes from July 20, 2026

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to accept the Meeting minutes of July 20, 2026, as submitted. Motion 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 #8

August 24, 2026

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ELECTRONIC DELIVERY AND INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSED
LOCAL LAWS VIA EMAIL**

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Freedom is empowered to consider and adopt local legislation pursuant to the Municipal Home Rule Law; and

WHEREAS, efficient administration and modern communication methods allow for the secure electronic transmission of proposed local laws to members of the legislative body; and

WHEREAS, the legal requirements for introducing a local law via mail or electronic transmission require that each member has a published email address on the Clerk's website and that this body adopts a unanimous authorization;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Freedom is hereby authorized to deliver copies of proposed local laws in PDF format via email to the official email address of each respective board member as listed on the municipal website, in lieu of or in addition to physical mailing, to satisfy introductory distribution requirements; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this authorization shall remain in effect for all future local law introductions unless modified or rescinded by formal action of this legislative body.

Motion was made by Josh Cutler, Seconded by R. Nick Morgan

Roll Call:

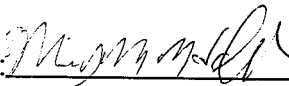
Aarum: Aye

Higgins: Aye

Morgan: Aye

Willard: Aye

Cutler: Aye

Clerk:  Date: 08/24/2026

IV. Old Business:

A. REMINDER FALL JUNK DAY will be on Saturday, September 26, 2026, from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm: PROOF OF RESIDENCY WILL BE REQUIRED

B. Expenditure on the funds in the bank: Supervisor Josh Cutler said that the 2.3 million dollars of mortgage tax that the town received last fall that the board placed in a CD last winter will become mature Friday, August 28, 2026. The CD earned approximately \$45,141.95 in interest. Josh said the board needs to decide whether they will be putting the money back into a CD or spend the money. Josh's thoughts are to put the \$45,141.95 into a municipal account, to cover the future cost for paving the extended parking lot by the park. Josh will get a quote from Matuszak Blacktopping to pave this. Councilman R. Nick Morgan would like to have a plan with the interest. For example, take 50% for paving roads, 20% for building projects, 20% for savings and 10% for something else. Josh said once it's transferred to a general account they can then transfer to said accounts. Josh said we could roll over the principal amount and have future discussion of what to do with the interest.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to reinvest 2.3 million dollars into a 7-month CD. Seconded by R. Nick Morgan.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

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A motion was made by Josh Cutler to transfer the interest from the 7-month CD of \$45,141.95 into a Municipal account to be further used for projects in the future. Seconded by S. R. Cory Higgins.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

C. **Data Center Discussion:** Supervisor Josh Cutler said the reason for the discussion is because the Town Attorney advised that before its placed on the November 2027 ballot as a referendum the town should have discussions on this with the public to build a pattern, asking the community what they would want and not want. Councilwomen Denise Willard stated that there was a discussion on the Five about Data Centers. One reason was because it uses a lot of water. They also talked about technology using portable nuclear energy to provide their own energy. Denise said Virginia is very big on Data Centers, and it brings in 1 billion dollars' worth of revenue to Virginia. Denise said no we don't want to put our town at risk but how does Virginia have all these Data Centers that brings in so much revenue. Councilman R. Nick Morgan stated its because of D.C. Josh C. said they lead the US in Data Centers. Nick said the Data Centers in D.C. are not the threat, the ones that are being built are for AI generation. They use a lot of electricity and generate a big amount of heat. The reason why they are using so much water is because they must keep them cool. Barb Baker said she feels they have to study more of the environmental impact of Data Centers, noise, water pollution, using electricity and raising everyone's rates. Barb also said would the technology be outdated in a few years and just leave the building sit. Barb said more investigating should go into this. Denise said she hoped that a SEQRE and an environmental study be done. Denise and Nick both discussed how we need to have this on record trying to prevent the State making the town have to comply and have them here. Barb said the town has no zoning, so there is nothing as of right now stopping anyone from putting one in. Nick asked if the Town Attorney should right up a moratorium on all data centers. Nick said when Adelphia was setting up in Coudersport, they ran a lot of fiber through Freedom so access for the companies is here. Nick said also the Northeast has been a targeted area because of its cold winters. Councilman Josh Aarum asked what can do, so we don't end up with them. Josh C. said moratorium and then referendum on next year's election ballot. Marica North asked if zoning would stand up against them. Josh C. said not from what he has read so far. Josh C. stated the Planning Board is working on Data Center Law, along with the BESS.

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V. New Business:

A. Special Budget Board Meeting on 2027 Town Budget, Monday, October 5, 2026 @ 7:00 pm and Monday, October 19, 2026 @ 6:00 pm:

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to accept the date and time for Monday, October 5, 2026, @ 7:00 pm and the Monday, October 19, 2026, 6:00 pm for Special Budget Board Meeting meets. Motion seconded by Josh Aarum.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

B. Special Public Hearings Meetings on Three Fire Contracts for Arcade, Delevan and Farmersville, and One Public Hearing for 2027 Town Budget on November 16, 2026 @ 7:00 pm.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to have a Special Public Hearings Meetings for the Arcade, Delevan and Farmersville fire contracts and 2027 Town Budget on November 16, 2026 @ 7:00 PM. Motion was seconded by Denise Willard.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

Note: Supervisor Josh Cutler has a meeting on September 1st with the Village of Arcade on the Fire Contract.

C. Cattaraugus County would like the Town of Freedom to possibly take over Freedom

RD: Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty said the County will give the town \$4700 a mile to plow for the winter for right now. Someday they would like the town to take the whole road over. Arcade gets \$7500 a mile from the county to plow their county roads and Jim said unless they come closer in price he will not be considering it. This will be postponed till the September meeting.

D. Light for the Post Office Flag: Councilman R. Nick Morgan said there is not a light at the Post Office for the flag. Supervisor Josh Cutler said they could pay an electrician to put one on the building and angle it up. There also needs to be a light at the Freedom Town Park's flag, and Elton's Cemetery flag. Both will be solar. Josh will get a quote to wire a light in at the Post Office and work on solar lights are.

E. Automatic CPR Machine: Councilman R. Nick Morgan said he was going to ask Invenergy about donating an automatic CPR machine to the three fire districts in Freedom.

1. **CPR Course:** Highway Superintended Jim Haggerty said that Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins got then set up for a CPR course on September 22. The board discussed getting 4 defibrillator machines, one for the Post Office, one for the boardroom, one for out in the

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highway department and one that should be with the highway crew on the road. Cory said that Bobby from Cattaraugus County should be able to shop around for us and get us a good price.

- F. **Repair of areas that have been changed due to windmill traffic:** S. R. Cory Higgins told Supervisor Josh Cutler that when he is talking to Grace from Invenergy to discuss that they should put things back the way they found it. There are a few locations where they have finished grading and all they do is dump dirt on the shoulder, bring in a excavator, spread it out and throw seed on it and call it good. Cory said that not how they found it, he would like to see a little bit more due care in this town. One of the problem areas in the intersection of Route 98 and Freedom RD. Councilwomen Denise Willard also stated that the monthly complaint list that is online has gotten very lengthy. She submitted a complaint about the poor traffic control when they are moving equipment. Cory agreed about the laziness of the employees, they used an unmarked white pickup truck to cross two lanes and then wave their hand, that not acceptable traffic control. Highway Superintended has asked them to patch roads, he said if they are not going to patch the roads they should pay for Jim to get patch to fix roads.
- G. **Road Monies:** Highway Superintended Jim Haggerty is asking for money to fix East County Line Road. He stated that he has not sat down with Bookkeeper Jessica Dart to get a financial update on his road repair money, but he's pretty sure he is broke. He would also like enough funds to fix Siloam RD. He is thinking approximately \$200,000 more should fix both. Councilman R. Nick Morgan stated that list does not include Mutton Hollow RD. Nick said that he does not think Mutton Hollow RD will last through the winter. Jim told Nick he is trying to get patch. Jim said East County Line RD will be dirt if they don't do something soon, and Siloam Rd the edges needs to be fixed. He stated he might be able to get Invenergy to pay for Siloam Rd, but until he sees the money he needs to do something. Supervisor Josh Cutler asked how the dollar amount is broken down between the two roads. Jim said it's approximately \$130,000 per mile and East County Line is just short of a mile. Siloam RD is .69 miles, but on this road, he would have to shim the shoulders before he paved it because the shoulders are in bad shape. Jim stated if anything he would at the least find money to shim the shoulders even if it gets plowed off the road is just terrible. Nick stated he does not feel they should do anything to East County Line because Invenergy will be bring in the last transformer on that road. Josh said looking at the budget they have about \$100,000 for Jim. Jim said Siloam RD needs to be fixed first. Councilwomen Denise Willard asked if Siloam Rd is on the Road Use Agreement. Jim said yes, it is. Nick stated that he does not want Jim to pave a road that Invenergy is driving heavy equipment on. Josh asked the board if they should give Jim \$100,000 to fix the road. Densie said she does not feel they should fix a road that Invenergy should fix. Councilman S.R. Cory Higgins asked Jim what are some other options

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besides totally fixing Siloam. Jim said paving it is the cheapest, and oil and stone it in the spring. Cory feels that they might cause damage but not immediate damage, then we are back to square one. He was wondering if there is another solution to be more creative to fix it. Jim said he can skid box the shoulders that would help a lot, he said it would be gone by spring. Cory said that Invenergy can build a new road by the spring. Josh asked if \$50,000 would be ok to do at least the side of Siloam RD. Nick said he be fine with that but after a call to Invenergy. Jim said he would give them a call to tell them that Siloam needs to be fixed.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to transfer \$50,000 to Jim's paving account. Seconded by S. R. Cory Higgins.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan, Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

- H. Welsh Cemetery:** Supervisor Josh Cutler asked Councilman R. Nick Morgan how it will be repaired from a vehicle running over many stones. Nick said their insurance company had contacted the deceased insurance company.

VI. Public Comment :

Gary Chamberlain: Gary stated that the board has just sat and talked for the last 20 mins about what goes on, on Freedom Roads. He would like it if they showed a little concern about Eagle Street in regard to the speeds. Gary has complained and complained, and no one is doing anything about it. Gary said there is an aqua-colored Subaru flying up and down the road. There is still 3 times the weight limit trucks driving over the bridge on Eagle Street. Gary asked the board if the surveyor did the survey at the park and the Post Office. Supervisor Josh Cutler said yes, Town Green and Town Park. Gary would like to know when the Town will get their property back from the Tuckers. Josh said it's in the process right now. Gary asked why the minutes are not in the paper anymore. Town Clerk Mindy Holland stated that the reporter we had passed away. Gary said all the other towns are in the paper. Mindy said they need to come to me and ask for her minutes; she doesn't just give her minutes out. Gary stated as far as the bridge on Eagle Street, it has a sag in it, someone will go through it one of these days. Josh asked Highways Superintendent Jim Haggerty about the bridge belonging to the County. Jim said yes and he complains about it every year. Councilman R. Nick Morgan said it needs to collapse before the County will do something. Gary said if you keep these trucks off of bridge then you can extend the life of the bridge and they know who it is driving over the bridge. Nick said that the bridge needs to be patched again and Jim said he will patch it but it will be back in the creek again in about 2 months. Councilman S. R. Cory

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Higgins directed question to Gary. Cory said being a former officer of the court what are the expectations of the Town Board to enforce VNT Laws on Eagle Street. Gary would like to see a cop on this street once in a while. Cory said we have had this conversation for a couple of months. Cory has talked to the road patrol commander; he has his officer spend a lot of time on Eagle Street running radar. Cory said what they can do is put their speed indicator in front of his driveway. Gary said they can put one at the end of his driveway. Cory will make that call to get one. Cory also stated to Gary that he takes offense to some of Gary's comments. When Cory is here at a Board Meeting he not working in official capacity as deputy sheriff. Cory told Gary to make the call to the Road Patrol Commander and share the concerns with him. Gary said he had called the Sheriff's office. Cory stated that they have no record of Gary calling. Cory said that they have been here watching the traffic on this road.

Barb Baker: She asked about the shoulder of the road on Brown School House Rd. Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty said he would get there to fix it in about a week or so.

VII. Reports & Communications :

- A) Assessors-Report Submitted
- B) Building Committee-
- C) Building Inspector-Report Submitted
- D) Highway Superintendent- Report Submitted
- E) Clerk/Tax Collector- Report Submitted
- F) Constable-
- G) DCO- Submitted before board meeting.
- H) Highway Committee
- I) Insurance Committee-
- J) Justices-
- K) Planning Board-
- L) Park & Recreations-
- M) Supervisor- Report Submitted
- N) Other Town Officials- Wendel Group Reports from 7/8/2026-8/11/2026

A motion to accept the reports & communications and the correct Assessor's report as submitted was made by Josh Cutler. Seconded by Denise Willard.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan,
Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

VIII. Approval of Vouchers:

General # 187 to #213, Amt. \$14,383.28, Yrly Amt. \$199,822.33 .

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

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Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

Highway #79 to #90, Amt. \$189,816.03, Yrly Amt. \$790,632.11.

Motion made by R. Nick Morgan to accept Highway vouchers as written. Seconded by
Josh Aarum

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan,
Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

Lighting District #8 to #8, Amt. \$373.70, Yrly Amt. \$3,165.78.

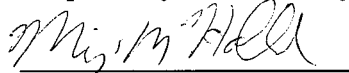
Motion made by Josh Aarum to accept the Lighting District vouchers as written.
Seconded by R. Nick Morgan.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan,
Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

IX. Adjournment: Josh Cutler made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm. Seconded
by R. Nick Morgan.

Roll Call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan,
Denise Willard, & Supervisor Josh Cutler

Respectfully Submitted By:



Freedom Town Clerk

09/04/2026