

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes
May 18, 2026

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

Other Officials Present: Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty,
& Planning Board Member Lyle Morgan.

Other: 2

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:

Regular Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2026.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from the April 20, 2026, meeting as submitted. Motion was seconded by Denise Willard.

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to close the Regular Board Meeting at 7:01 pm. Seconded by Denise Willard.

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to open the Public Hearing on Local Law #2 of 2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN SOLAR ENERGY USES” at 7:02 pm. Seconded by Josh Aarum.

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

**III. Town of Freedom
Local Law #2 of 2026**

ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN SOLAR ENERGY USES

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SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this Local Law is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Town of Freedom and to maintain the status quo as to certain solar energy uses, as the preset laws and ordinances regulations on the Town do not adequately address this type of use. The moratorium will stop the processing of applications for, and the issuing of any permits, certifications of occupancy and approvals of certain land uses relating to solar energy, including, but not limited to solar farms. The moratorium is for a period of six (6) months, allowing the Town Board to analyze and determine potential appropriate revisions and amendments to the Town of Freedom laws and ordinances concerning this use.

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS

The Town of Freedom Town Board does hereby find that without a temporary halt on the processing, permitting and approvals for certain solar land uses there is the potential that such uses could be located in unsuitable areas within the town and/ or on particular lots without adequate dimensional regulations in place. The potential for unsuitable location of, and lack of proper dimensional regulations for, such uses would have materially adverse and irreversible impacts on the Town.

The Town Board also finds that it is in need of time to perform the necessary analysis if the potential types of solar energy facilities that could be located in the Town. By maintaining the status quo regarding such uses, the Town Board can provide for the planned orderly growth and development of the Town.

SECTION 3. MORATORIUM IMPOSED, APPLICABILITY

For the period of time of six (6) months following the effective date of the adoption of this Local Law, no application may be processed and no permits, certificates of occupancy, approvals, denials, determinations or interpretations may be issued or granted for any land uses relating to solar energy, including, but not limited to solar farms.

The term "land uses relating to solar energy" shall be broadly construed to include any facility designated to generate electric power to be marketed, sold or used for other than the power demands of the improvements on the property on which such facility is located. Plus, the allowable overage is allowed by the electric utility that supplies the power through a grid interconnect permit.

Not included within the scope of this moratorium are residential and agricultural solar energy installations designed to generate electric power solely for the use of the improvements located on the same property. Residential and agricultural can sell excess power to the utility company if they allow.

The term "solar farm" shall mean "a collection of solar panels covering one-quarter (1/4) acres or more of land that are designed to capture sunlight and transform it into electricity. This definition includes freestanding and ground pole-mounted photovoltaic panels that are mounted on or affixed to residential dwellings for their use, or municipal buildings, or existing panels mounted on commercial or industrial buildings.

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This Local Law shall be binding on the Town Board, Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer, all Town officials and employees, and any applicant or real property owner in the Town desiring to apply for or receive a permit, certificate of occupancy or approval in the Town of Freedom.

During the period of moratorium, the Town Board shall endeavor to complete all reasonable and necessary review, study, analysis and if warranted, revisions to the Town of Freedom laws and ordinances. During the period of moratorium, no applications will be accepted, nor permits, certificates of occupancy or approvals issues, which would authorize development within the Town for land uses relating to solar energy as described above.

SECTION 4. TERM

This moratorium shall be in effect for a period of six (6) consecutive months from its effective date. This local law shall be subject to renewal for a cumulative period of up to an additional six (6) months, if necessary, by Resolution of the Town Board.

SECTION 5. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS

To the extent that any law, ordinance, rule or regulation, or parts thereof, are in conflict with the provision of this Local Law, including all provisions of Article 16 of the New York State Town Law concerning special use permit, site plan, building permit and certificate of occupancy, procedure and requirements, this Local Law shall control and supersede such law ordinance, rule or regulation.

SECTION 6. WAIVER

Owing to the limited scope and duration of this moratorium, there is no provision being made in this Local Law for any waivers of applicability. However, the Town Board may, but is not obligated to, promulgate regulations by a Resolution of the Board authorizing a hardship waiver process to this moratorium.

SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or part of this Local Law shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the clause, paragraph, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered, and the remaining provision shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with New York Municipal Home Rule.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

This law will expire in 6 Months, November 2026.

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A motion was made by Josh Cutler to close the Public Hearing on Local Law #2 of 2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN SOLAR ENERGY USES” at 7:03 pm. Seconded by Josh Aarum

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to open the Regular Board Meeting at 7:04 pm. Seconded by R. Nick Morgan.

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to PASS Local Law #2 of 2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN SOLAR ENERGY USES”. Seconded by R. Nick Morgan.

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

IV. Town of Freedom

RESOLUTION #5-2026

May 18, 2026

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF FREEDOM ADOPTING THE
CATTARAUGUS COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTION HAZARD MITIGATION
PLAN, ADOPTED BY CATTARAUGUS COUNTY ON JULY 8, 2025.

WHEREAS the Freedom Town Board recognizes the threat that natural hazards pose to people and property within Town Freedom; and

WHEREAS the Town of Freedom has prepared a multi-hazard mitigation plan, hereby known as Cattaraugus County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, Adopted by Cattaraugus County on July 8, 2025, in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000; and

WHEREAS Cattaraugus County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, adopted by Cattaraugus County on July 8, 2025, identifies mitigation goals and actions to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property in the Town of Freedom from the impacts of future hazards and disasters; and

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WHEREAS adoption by the Town of Freedom Town Board demonstrates their commitment to hazard mitigation and achieving the goals outlined in the Cattaraugus County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, adopted by Cattaraugus County on July 8, 2025.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF FREEDOM, THAT:

Section 1. The Town of Freedom Town Board adopts the Cattaraugus County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan, adopted by Cattaraugus County on July 8, 2025. This plan, approved by the community, may be edited or amended after submission for review, but will not require the community to re-adopt any further iterations. This only applies to this specific plan and does not absolve the community from updating the plan in 5 years.

A Motion Made By Josh Cutler

Motion Seconded By S. R. Cory Higgins

Roll Call:

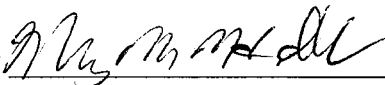
Councilman Josh Aarum: AYE

Councilman S.R. Cory Higgins: AYE

Councilman R. Nick Morgan: AYE

Councilwoman Denise Willard: AYE

Supervisor Joshua K. Cutler: AYE

Certified by  Freedom Town Clerk, Date: 05/18/2026
Mindy M. Holland

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- 1.) **No Parking signs at the Post Office during business hours:** Supervisor Josh Cutler told the board that the weekend prior to the meeting there was a baseball game at the Sandusky Park and the Post Office parking lot was filled with vehicles. This was a problem for the Post Office because they blocked the blue drop box and they filled the spaces for the Post Office. Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty stated that he would take care of this problem with a phone call. Jim will tell them to park on the grass. Josh said that we will try that first.

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- 2.) **Pins on the Town Green and Town Park:** Supervisor Josh Cutler asked the board their thoughts of getting surveys done on both parcels and having pins placed to know where each property line is. Once the pins are in place there will be a fence put up at the Town Green. Josh will call the surveyors and get this done.
 - a. Josh mentioned about the tree's branches hanging over the fence and needing trimmed back. Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty said he has not had time and it is wet and he can't drive the excavator on there yet. Josh also said there are trees in the area by the park shelter that are a concern. Jim said he could ask Asplundh Tree Service and see if they could do it. They park at the Town Hall all year, Jim said they may do it for free.
- 3.) **Sheriff presences on Eagle Street:** Councilman R. Nick Morgan asked Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins if he could get a Sheriff to sit on Eagle Street for a speeding issue.
- 4.) **Social media policy:** Councilman R. Nick Morgan will send an email out to the board for review and to be discussed at the next meeting.
- 5.) **Data Centers Moratorium:** Councilman R. Nick Morgan will look into this.
- 6.) **Invenergy public awareness:** Councilman S. R. Cory Higgins asked Grace Armison if Invenergy has a public awareness site, to give notice to the residents, especially when there is big movement in town. Grace said that there is none, what they do is send a three week look ahead and it goes to Supervisor Josh Cutler, and Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty. Cory said that the transformer movement, one of the school district school buses, was stopped for 40 minutes, it caused a lot of grief for many people. Cory concern is if there is a medical emergency on the county line sometimes Allegheny County will get toned out or it may come from Wyoming or Cattaraugus. He stated that a few days after the move there was an emergency in that area and the call went to Allegany County and they did not recognize the road, and if they had come to the emergency during the move and the traffic was stopped they don't know how to get around these roads in the Freedom area. Cory said that we have to do better as far as an emergency plan, and for the public in general. Councilman R. Nick Morgan said even moving the cranes there should be mass notification for the community. Councilwoman Denise Willard stated with the transformer move that the State was not even aware of the culvert coverings during the move. Grace told the board that there is part two of this coming in July. The Town might have to give notification to the residents. Councilman Josh Aarum asked about a live blog on the Invenergy website.

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VI. OLD BUSINESS:

VII. Public Comments: No Public Comment

VII. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS:

- A) Assessors –**Grievance Day May 28th from 4 pm to 8pm**
- B) Building Committee –
- C) Building Inspector – Report Submitted
- D) Highway Superintendent – Report submitted.
- E) Clerk/Collector – Report Submitted.
- F) Constable –
- G) DCO- Report Submitted. Supervisor Josh Cutler asked Town Clerk Mindy Holland if DCO Jeremy Lavery had stated he was coming to the meeting and she stated yes. Jerney has told Mindy that he like to talk to the Board about mailing out Dog Census Surveys. Mindy stated that when the surveys had been sent out for the planning board there were a lot of letters sent and about 380 came back. Mindy's thought is that the Dog Census will get thrown in the garbage and it's a waist of stamps. Mindy feels a door-to-door census is the way to go. Josh will talk to Jeremy about census.
- 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 04/16/2026-5/7/2026**

A motion to accept the reports & communications as submitted except the Assessors because they put Mansfield on the report, motion 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 #109 to # 132, Amt. \$12,414.37, Yrly Amt. \$142,979.81.

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

Roll call: Ayes-5 Josh Aarum, S. R. Cory Higgins, R. Nick Morgan,

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Highway # 46 to # 55, Amt. \$8,716.07, Yrly Amt. \$226,738.62.

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

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

Lighting District #5 to # 5, Amt.\$377.26, Yrly Amt.\$2,067.17.

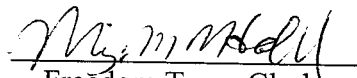
**Motion made by Josh Cutler to accept the Lighting District vouchers as
submitted. Seconded by Denise Willard.**

**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 7:30 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
5/22/2026