

Town of Freedom
Regular Board Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes
Monday, April 20, 2026

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

Other Officials: Highway Superintended Jim Haggerty, and

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 – Monday, March 16, 2026

A motion was made by Josh Culter to accept the Meeting Minutes as
submitted. Seconded by Denise Willard.

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

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

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to open the Public Hearing on Local Law #1 of
2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN BATTERY ENERGY
SOLAR SYSTEM (BESS) UTILITY SIZED USES” at 7:02 pm. Seconded by Josh
Aarum.

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

**III. Town of Freedom
Local Law #1 of 2026
ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN BATTERY
ENERGY SOLAR SYSTEM (BESS) UTILITY SIZED USES**

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this Local Law is to the protect the public health, safety, and
welfare of the residents of the Town of Freedom and to maintain the status quo as to

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certain BESS 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 BESS, 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 BESS 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 BESS, including, but not limited to solar farms.

The term "land uses relating to BESS" 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. Not included within the scope of this moratorium are BESS facilities designed to generate electric power solely for the use of the improvements located on the same property.

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.

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 BESS as described above.

SECTION 4. TERM

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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

Town Clerk Mindy Holland noted that this law would only be good for 6 months.

A motion was made by Denise Willard to close the Public Hearing on Local Law #1 of 2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN BATTERY ENERGY SOLAR SYSTEM (BESS) UTILITY SIZED USES” at 7:10 pm. Seconded by Josh Aarum.

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to open the Regular Board Meeting at 7:10 pm. Seconded by Josh Aarum.

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

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to PASS Local Law #1 of 2026 titled “ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN BATTERY ENERGY SOLAR SYSTEM (BESS) UTILITY SIZED USES” Seconded by Denise Willard.

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

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

**ADOPTING A MORATORIUM ON CERTAIN SOLAR
ENERGY USES**

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.

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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.

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.

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A motion was made by Josh Cutler to set the Public Hearing on May 18, 2026, at 7:01 pm. Seconded by Josh Aarum.

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

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- A) Grievance Board: The Town Board needs to approve the Grievance Board to be here for Grievance Day from 3:45-8 pm on May 28, 2026.**

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to approve the Grievance Board to work from 3:45-8pm on May 28, 2026. Seconded by Denise Willard.

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

- B) Key Fobs Quote:** Supervisor Josh Cutler stated there is a quote to put two key fobs in. One for upstairs where the security system is, that is required, and the other at the back door in the hallway to the highway department. Josh said that he would like to hold off on that for now till they decide on the future on remodeling the offices in the building. Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty asked who would have keys to the highway garage. Josh said himself, Town Clerk Mindy Holland, and Custodian Jack Lawrence.
- C) Donated Flag:** Tom Eric from Cheney Road donated a large flag that says Freedom and is celebrating the 250 years of America. The Board decided to place the flag above the board seats in the board room so it would not get ruined.
- D) Light Pole #P157-1 on Marble Springs Rd:** Supervisor Josh Cutler explained that this pole is located at the racetrack and has a caution light on this pole not a streetlight. The Town has been charged for this caution light for 15 years. This is supposed to be a streetlight. Josh said we have two options to talk to the racetrack about this or to talk to National Grid and ask them to take this off the bill. The Board was all in favor to remove this off the bill.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

- A) REMINDER SPRING JUNK DAYS Friday, May 15, 2026, and Saturday, May 16, 2026, from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm at Preivity's:** Councilman Josh Aarum stated that the fun signs will be ready later in the week.
- B) Pickup Truck:** Highway Superintendent Jim Haggerty said that he is going with a Dodge. Ford is about \$400 more than the dodge. Ford can't get a

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plastic bed liner; Rhino liner is too hard to clean. Ford was not completely on board with putting extra springs on the truck, if they did put extra springs it would void the warranty. Dodge had no issues putting extra springs in the truck and they are putting both front and back springs in. Ford is \$55,074.48 with everything except the bed liner. Dodge is \$54,774.50. Both extended cabs except Dodge has a smaller box. The new truck should be here in two to three months. They also will be trading the Ford that the town has now for \$22,000.00.

A motion was made by Josh Cutler to except the bid for \$54,774.50 for the Dodge 350, diesel pickup truck. Josh Aarum seconded the motion.

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

V. Public Comment: NO Comments

VI. REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS:

- A) Assessors – Report Submitted
- B) Building Committee –
- C) Building Inspector – Report Submitted
- D) Highway Superintendent – Report Submitted
- E) Clerk/Collector – Report Submitted.

Shelter Contribution

Town Clerk Mindy Holland explained that New York State passed in December, a Shelter Contribution. On renewals for dog license there is a line item that stays “Please consider making an optional donation to Animal Friends of Wyoming County Animal Shelter”. This is the shelter the town contracts with. The donation is placed in the Town Clerks system, and at the end of each month Mindy will cut a check with the donations to the Supervisor to be places in A2705 and at the end of the year the Supervisor will send a check to Wyoming County Animal Shelter.

- F) Constable –
- G) DCO – Report Submitted
- H) Highway Committee –
- I) Insurance Committee-
- J) Justices –
- K) Parks & Recreation –
- L) Planning Board – Minutes Submitted
- M) Supervisor – Report Submitted
- N) Other Town Officials – Wendel Group Reports from 03/12/2026-04/09/2026**

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

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

VII. APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS:

General #80 to #108, Amt. \$43,143.82, Yrly Amt. \$130,565.44.

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

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

Highway #33 to #45, Amt. \$11,952.13, Yrly Amt. \$218,022.55.

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

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

Lighting District # 4 to #4, Amt.\$380.46, Yrly Amt.\$1,689.91.

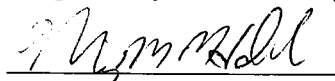
Motion made by Josh Cutler to accept the Lighting District vouchers as
submitted. Seconded by Josh Aarum.

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

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: Josh Cutler made the motion to adjourn the
meeting at 7:26 pm. Seconded by Denise Willard.

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

Respectfully Submitted by



Mindy M. Holland

Freedom Town Clerk 04/27/2026