

Public Meeting
Freedom Conservation Commission and Forest Advisory Committee
Tuesday January 20, 2026 - 6:30 pm at the Freedom Town Hall
Minutes

Quorum Check, Roll Call FAC/FCC

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Jeff Nicoll. Present are:
FCC – Jeff Nicoll, Megan Broderick, Nancy Cristoferi, Sue Hoople, Susan Marks
FAC – Paul Elie, Ron Newbury, Yvonne Hoyt, Gary Williams-Selectboard Rep.

R.A. Oram and James Guido are absent
Dave George, Scrub Oak Scramblers, is also absent

2 Approval of December 2025 FAC/FCC Meeting Minutes- typo on 54 – Beaver Pond – line 22 – clarify – Gary was missing – include Gary – “add Gary: Sue should be on the list” Line 31 – plan next update is 2030. Line 60 – typo – “to” approve. Line 72 – add e to encumber. Line 141 – change hat to that. Megan made a motion to approve as amended, Ron seconded. APPROVED

FAC

3 FAC Member Application – There is a lady in town who is interested in joining. She is unable to attend tonight, but will come to the March meeting. An application has been provided.

4 Tree Cutting TPT Access #1 Trail – get with SOS and handle this in the spring.

5 Timber Harvests – info was provided in the packets. For the most part it is the same as last year. Barry is working on this as we speak. The big cut (135 acres in compartment 3) – already marked and ribboned off. Second cut is 40 acres – from Trout Pond western edge to Trout Pond Trail. He is also looking at an area closer to Gate 1, acreage tbd. He would like to merge all three into one cut. The harvest will take place sometime in the summer. In conjunction with the first cut is to have them cut right up to the gravel pit. Moth damage has been taken into consideration. Megan spoke about the letter and the new management agreement, there is a reference to

“checks” but it should refer to revenue. Upon reconsideration, it is being left as is.

6 Forest User Survey – nothing done at this time. Paul will be calling camps along the water, and SOS. There is a school from Rochester that brings hundreds of kids up in the summer. He will try to contact them. Jeff mentioned the possibility of needing a land use form for that activity.

7 FAC Invoices – none

Green Mountain Conservation Group is having a snowshoe hike up to Trout Pond in February. We were not notified of this. Oram and Paul will speak to Green Mountain. A land use form should be filled out. That Friday (the 20th) is vacation week for Massachusetts. Jeff suggested having information on the website about this topic.

Scrub Oak Scramblers have done a lot of work out there. They had help from other clubs.

8 Public Comment - none

9 Adjourn FAC – Paul made a motion to adjourn at 6:54 pm, Ron seconded. The FAC portion of the meeting was adjourned.

FCC

10 FOIA – Right to Know Request – Email from Stacy indicates that as far as the office knows, everything has been supplied. No other information has been requested.

11 GMCG FCC Rep – lists surrounding towns. Alice Custard was listed as the rep. We do not know how this position gets appointed. Jeff will ask. Oram believes it is the Town. Paul thought it was FCC that did the appointment.

12 Site Plan App Review – Camp Cody – Planning Board received this and asked FCC to take a look at it. Jeff provided a memo outlining the project. Email to Planning Board from Zoning Officer was also distributed for review. Brian

Fontaine had some concerns. A lot of hydro-cad work was done. A 100-year storm was calculated. Concerns – maintenance of infiltration trenches. They can silt up and freeze up. The CAD work was done to reflect ideal conditions, but does not apply to what might happen at this time of year. They are asking for a waiver for contours for the whole site. Is 150' enough to understand where all the water is coming and going? Suggest looking at them outside of where the water is going might be helpful. Sue asked about having a work session with Planning Board to review these plans. A work session of a general nature, not specific to any one plan, may be helpful. There is a concern about the wetlands that are near the location of the proposed new building.

Sue – wonders how to frame this: Members and alternates to be given guidance on what research they are allowed to do. Specifically re: wetlands, definition of nitrate plume and how it impacts the septic in this particular case. Concern about overload or failure of systems.

Send to Planning Board – concerns outlined in memo – DES confirmation, best management practice details, drip edge details re: silt infiltration and such, overflow emergency bypass to prevent flow into the lake (runoff and septic failures), suggest requirement of inspection of infiltration and septic systems after a set number of years to check that things are working as they are supposed to. Dumpster and water quality controls. Topography waiver, landscaping plan should be provided. Jeff will summarize and forward to the Planning Board.

Megan made a motion to allow Jeff to formalize the recommendation into a memo for the Planning Board, Nancy seconded. APPROVED He will forward to Brian Fontaine as well.

13 FCC Invoices - none

14 Other business to come before the Commission – Aquatics Update – received an approval from DES that approved the grant for this year. Paperwork needs to be signed and returned. The same vendors as last year are being used. Permitting will need to be paid for. State will pay half. Last year's divers did a good job.

A motion to accept the grant from the State move forward to get it submitted was made by Megan, seconded by Nancy. APPROVED

Megan and Jeff went to the budget meeting with the Selectmen. Everything has been submitted.

Jeff has to write an annual report from the FCC for the Town Report. Aquatics and forest will be included. If you have anything you would like included, let Jeff know. Nancy provided a summary of the 2025 Lake Host Program.

A question was asked regarding having a Selectboard Rep. to the FCC. Jeff will check into this with Oram.

15 Public Comment - none

16 Adjourn FCC – Nancy made a motion to adjourn at 8:02 pm, Sue seconded. The FCC meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Donaldson
Recording Secretary