Freedom and Unity Committee
September 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Craftsbury Public Library

Present: Jeannine Young, Susie Houston, Emma Stout, Daniel Solomon, Bru Mille, Wendy Turnbull
Absent: Christine Rubino, Ada Allen

Working Group updates:

- Civics Education
    - Jeannine will reach out to Craftsbury Academy about participating in the "Ring the Bells" event on Weds 9/17 at 4:00PM. It commemorates the signing of the U.S. Constitution on this date in 1787.
    - Susie to follow-up with CA principal about interest & capacity to participate in Vermont's Kid Governor program for 5th graders. Registration currently open. https://vt.kidgovernor.org/

- Leadership
    - The public forum, "Strengthening Town Governance: What Have Our Neighbors Tried?" is scheduled for Thursday, Oct 9 at Town Hall, from 6-7:30PM. It's on the town calendar.
    - Confirmed panelists include current and former town administrators and selectboard members from Burke, Coventry, Glover and Cambridge, along with staff from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). Daniel will moderate.
    - The forum will be available on Zoom. Will need to identify a Zoom moderator and discuss with Town Clerk about using the town's Zoom account and recording it.
    - Other tasks for the forum: email invitations; designing a flyer & putting up around town; schedule of FPF posts; refreshments; set up and break down.

- Craftsbury University
    - No update as preparations for 2026 class schedule won't get underway for a few more months.

Other business:

- Wendy shared highlights from the Vermont Council on Rural Development Summit (Aug 11, 2025) in Randolph and passed around the program of workshops and panel discussions. VCRD's Community Leadership Summit featured and was attended by selectboard members, town clerks, town committee chairs and members, and local organizations from across the state. Group agreed we should recommend Craftsbury make funds available for a few folks to participate in the VCRD Summit each year.
- Question was raised about F&U getting involved in the traffic calming discussion as a civics matter. Group agreed to monitor discussion and see where it goes.
- 2026 town budget – possibility of holding draft budget session in early December for townspeople to weigh in, ahead of budget being finalized and warned for Town Meeting Day? Discuss in more depth at F&U's October meeting and raise with selectboard for thoughts, reactions.
- Convening of town commission and committee chairs and members – to share updates and identify areas of possible collaboration, review new developments (ie, new town website), provide refresher on open meeting law requirements and town processes (ie, submission of agendas, minutes, reimbursement claims, filling committee vacancies) and the like. Discuss more with Town Clerk and selectboard. Ideally, convening happens in March/April following Town Meeting.

Next meeting:

- Weds Oct 1 @ 5pm, Craftsbury Public Library