

**Town of Starksboro
Selectboard Meeting minutes
November 7, 2017
DRAFT**

PRESENT: Susan Jefferies, Peter Marsh, Tony Porter, Keegan Tierney, Koran Cousino
Rebecca Elder (SB assistant)

VISITORS: Tom Estey, Jane Ploof, Sam Carlson, Dave Russell

The meeting was called to order by Susan Jefferies at 5:35 p.m.

Road Report – Tom Estey

- Susan asked Tom if the area proposed re: Thatcher Hurd land would be okay with him regarding town needs (hauling sand, truck access) per the map that was distributed. All is fine per Tom.
- District sent emails about emergency fund applications for storm damage. FEMA requests a GPS location of each downed tree to document for funds; not a reasonable request or worth the time. Tom estimates \$5K damage from the recent storm and power outages.
- Based on the current balance sheet for road maintenance, there could be fund available for tire for the grader. If not, these should be included in the budget for next year.
- Jane Ploof attended regarding signage on Jerusalem Rd. Tom explained with the storm he has not had time to get to the signage but will do so soon. He will look the specs before the next meeting. No reduce speed sign is necessary (Lincoln side is 35 mph). Tony will get back to Jane with updates.
- Tom suggests a pick-up truck be put into the next budget. He is accumulating a lot of miles as is Tony. ¾ ton - \$30K state contract price. Extended cab. \$30K over 5 yrs – reserve fund balance? Dips near 0 in the next fiscal year so best to have first annual payment in 2019 (buy in July 2018) If replace 1T, could do a low pro (slightly smaller dump truck) – probably around \$100K –
- Tool inventory needed. Many of the mechanical tools currently used are not owned by the town.
- Reserve fund is for equipment – report to the voters on what is spent. System is redundant – SB asks for funds from taxpayers, then asks for permission to use it. Peter noted that, in the past, the Selectboard would include a blanket request for approval of funds in the Town Meeting agenda.

Generator request for Town Office:

Are the computers connected to the UPC backups that would back up for any amount of time?
During emergencies, the Town Office can communicate with Tom on the 2-way radios. Power is needed to maintain the phone lines and to prevent pipes from freezing in the building at a minimum. During the recent storm, town employees continued to work without heat or power because it was tax collection time and a bond vote was scheduled.

The board agreed to get an estimate and include in the town budget for next year.

Green Lantern Solar Proposal

Sam Carlson (Green Lantern Solar, GLS) and town resident Dave Russell attended. Sam reviewed the proposal and summarized the current questions. Details include: max. height of 30'; southern row of panels was moved to the back side; simple fencing needed to protect young trees from deer. GLS will do what Dave feels is best and will work (placement should allow for access with a mower and a 4 ft gate).

GLS to work with Green Mountain Power (GMP) to determine best way for power to be carried off the land; they will look at placement of poles to get to the array. The option to lease agreement will be needed before GMP will work on site plan for poles.

Signing the option would allow GLS to move forward with their R&D, to contact Green Mountain Power, etc. GLS and Dave would have their own agreement regarding plantings, etc. GLS has completed the wetland survey and endangered species survey already. Next is the geo-technical work (i.e. how deep is

top soil? what is the condition of the cap?) Test pits would be dug to see if everything remains stable and consistent to handle the weight of the panels and associated installation work. Town to receive \$500 upon signing.

Sam Carlson/GLS revised the Option and it was distributed for review. The Selectboard agreed no legal counsel was needed for review at this time.

The Selectboard agreed that a public informational hearing should be held to allow residents to ask questions and understand the project. There will not be an official vote. An article will appear in the Addison Independent on Thursday, 11/9 – Gaen Murphree interviewed Susan, Peter, and Cheryl for the story.

Anticipated time frame:

- Apply for intersection with GMP
- GMP will decide if feasibility study is needed (up to 2 mos), but could also say yes
- Then 45-day notice of the plan to apply for CPG to abutters, town, state, RPC, etc.
- After the 45-day window is over, GLS can submit for the permit from Public Utility Commission.
- Then timeline is unknown – permits average 4-5 months.
- Hope to have permit by May-June: wouldn't want to build before it is completely dry.
- 6 week build – operational by August if possible

Motion: Tony moved that the SB proceed to sign the Option to Lease with GL Development. Peter Marsh seconded.

VOTE: All in favor

- Public informational meeting at Robinson Elementary School: **Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 6:30**

Current Business

- **Zoning Administrator vacancy** – waiting for the PC to say what they want to advertise for.
- Tony spoke to residents on Mason Hill N regarding zoning complaint. Resident understood, reiterated his concerns, and requests periodic updates. Understands the limitations of the Bylaws and enforcement.
- **Palmer grievance** – Susan spoke with Jim Carroll before the status update hearing. SB supports the town's assessment and deems it fair to Palmer and the rest of the town. The case will proceed through the court system.

Class 4 road /trail re-classification update

- Planning Commission - Koran and Susan attended the PC meeting. They are not in favor of any reclassification of any roads for any reason. They see the discussion as not addressing major concerns and feel the violations can be addressed with signage (advisory only, not enforceable). The PC believes the town would be giving up rights unnecessarily. The current concerns do not justify a change of status.
- Conservation Commission: Wishes to protect resources and upland forested areas. The CC supports reclassification and any actions that deter development.
- Keegan mentioned that the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) receives funding from DEC to help address water issues on a road. That may be a resource for some improvements.
- The Selectboard members each described their current view of the Class 4 vs. trail status discussion. Koran feels the town should keep Class 4 status as is; start with signage to address problems; more enforcement to correct issues. Keegan agreed. Susan feels there is no reason to retain Perry Sweet; try to address water issues with help on Brown Hill; try signage to mitigate problems. Tony can see both sides of each example; supports Perry Sweet re-classification. Peter finds it contradictory that Starksboro would keep Class 4 status but not have any interest in maintaining the roads or keeping them drivable; doesn't see future town interest in making Brown Hill passable.

Motion: Peter Marsh moved to proceed in seeking re-classification status of Perry Sweet Road from Class 4 to trail. Susan Jefferies seconded.

Vote: Proceed 3 yes (Marsh, Jefferies, Porter), 2 nay (Cousino, Tierney)

Motion: Peter Marsh moved to proceed in seeking re-classification status of Mason Hill from the north edge of cemetery to north border of Turner Brook from Class 4 to trail, retain ROW, and post appropriate signage for vehicular traffic. Susan Jefferies seconded.

Vote: Proceed 1 (Marsh), 4 nay

Motion: Peter Marsh moved to rescind the motion to proceed on Perry Sweet. Susan Jefferies seconded.

Vote: Rescind motion 3 yes (Marsh, Jefferies, Porter), 2 abstain (Cousino, Tierney)

- No reclassification.
- In December, discuss what to do about signage. Tony will research and come back with a proposal. Keegan will touch base with VYCC about possible work related to water issues on Class 4 roads.

Land swap/transfer with Robinson School Board

Koran met with the School Board and Superintendent Patrick Reen. They expressed strong support of the land swap of 14.1 acres for their .4 acres that the town owns that the school sits on. (See motion in the school board minutes) SB to take on the legal process and the transaction will be approved by the school board's legal counsel. Specific language pertaining to septic area to be provided by school board. Lease is year to year. Include binding language. A Purchase and Sale Agreement is needed.

Motion: Tony Porter moved to contact Jim Runcie to see if he will draw up the Purchase and Sale agreement as described. Peter Marsh seconded.

Vote: All in favor.

- Susan will contact Jim Runcie regarding his availability and Koran will follow up with details. Peter noted that an update could be shared with the town at the 12/12 informational meeting.

Building and maintenance updates

- Exterior light adjustment – Keegan will try to take care of it with the ladder he has available.
- Porch RFPs – Mitch Horner submitted a proposal. No others received. Total estimate is \$3850 (incl. labor & materials; trash removal) Quote valid for 60 days. Permitting would be the town's responsibility. White oak will be used; hand rail strength/stability needs to be addressed (material TBD).

Motion: Keegan Tierney moved to accept the bid by Mitch Horner. Tony Porter seconded.

Vote: All in favor.

- **Roof RFP** – Mitch Horner submitted a proposal for asphalt shingles. Keegan to confirm that another contractor (Murphys) could offer \$7/sq ft for standing seam, which is preferable.
- **Front entrance improvements** – Accessible entrance needs ramp improvement. Road crew to assess and repair the ramp for easy access. Also apply weather coating to prevent slipping. Same is needed for the entrance to the library.
- Bulletin board was installed on exterior wall for postings and is available for use.
- **Mold issue** – Dehumidifier was hooked up; mold test performed by Bill Coon. No apparent mold in the basement. Moisture buildup in the crawl space could be a source of the odor. Susan and Tony could smell the odor in a physical inspection. There is insulation on top of plastic and this could trap dampness, etc. One option could be to dig a hatch to allow for access and cleaning. Currently, there is an air purifier in the listers' office. Perhaps add a dehumidifier as well.

- **New repair needed: Post office** – The front window frame in the lobby is broken at the top and is letting in cold air. Peter has assessed it. The top sash needs to be removed and rebuilt or need to replace the whole window. They are original windows. Peter to address.
- **Lighting improvements** - Don McCormick has changed the lights from fluorescent to LED; Post Office still needs to be done in near future.
- **Jerusalem School house** – Roof metal was pulled back in storm: now fixed, secured, caulked. Pressure gauge on well pump was fixed. Event on 12/10 then water to be turned off.
- **Animal control** – No updates since last meeting.

Second-class liquor and tobacco license application for the Jerusalem Country Store was submitted. State must issue formal approval.

Motion: Tony Porter moved to approve the second-class liquor and tobacco license. Peter Marsh seconded.

Vote: All in favor.

Minutes from 10/17/17

A couple of minor corrections were noted.

Motion: Koran Cousino moved and Tony Porter seconded the motion to approve the minutes of October 17, 2017.

Vote: All in favor.

Bills and orders: Bills were returned with questions.

Motion: Koran moved to give Tony permission to approve the Nov 9 2017 orders with corrections. Keegan seconded. Payroll and other orders approved for payment.

Vote: All in favor.

The Board discussed its role in providing oversight over the payment of bills/orders. Some towns use a bookkeeper/accountant to support the work of the Treasurer.

Motion: Tony Porter moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion to adjourn.

Vote: All in favor

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant