

**Town of Starksboro  
Selectboard Special Meeting minutes  
October 10, 2017  
DRAFT**

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**Board Members Present:** Koran Cousino, Tony Porter, Peter Marsh, Keegan Tierney and Selectboard Assistant Rebecca Elder

**Visitors:** Denny Casey, Jeff Keeney, Amy McCormick

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The meeting was called to order at 5:30

The Selectboard called the special meeting to discuss the Zoning Administrator (ZA) vacancy and short-term coverage of the essential tasks of the ZA for which the Town needs coverage.

T. Porter met with Amy McCormick and Dave Wetmore to discuss the list of ZA duties prior to his departure. Amy expressed willingness to take on many of the administrative duties such as fielding general inquiries and collecting applications, taking minutes, drafting agendas, assembling applications, etc. The town can pare down services in the next few months while searching for a new ZA.

The Selectboard asked if there is a list of unfinished items from Dave. Amy will follow up on this.

- S. Jefferies noted that the Town cannot issue CO or permits without appointing an interim ZA to be able to do this. You have a 30-day window to act on a permit or it is automatically approved.
- The sale of a house in town would require a CO. There is at least one resident needing this in the immediate future.
- Jeff noted there are a few outstanding items with the DRB.

Jeff Keeney is willing to work for the Town as the interim ZA for issuing permits and non-administrative ZA responsibilities. When Amy can work with Jeff on applications that require more input.

The board discussed with Denny Casey the items of most importance to the Planning Commission and DRB in the next few months:

- PC Meetings are 2.5 hrs avg/2x month – minutes/posting
- DRB Meetings are 1-2 hrs/1x month avg (variable) – minutes/postings
- Town Plan assistance, including work with Brandy Saxton (consultant)
- Grant administration, and
- possible contact with the Regional Planning Commission.

Dave has been doing minutes for 12 years so the system can be followed.

Town has two regional planning representatives but has little interaction with them currently. The SB should invite them to come to a meeting a few times a year. Dave was the contact/liaison so outreach will be needed by the new ZA.

T. Porter asked if the current job description and outline is accurate. Jeff and Denny confirmed that everything is there.

The PC recommendation is to have Amy fill in on as much as she can and feels comfortable doing and to hire Jeff on an hourly basis to issue permits, etc. Amy agreed to extend her hours at her current rate as Assistant Town Clerk. Jeff will charge his professional engineering rate of \$80/hour. The board asked about Jeff's experience doing this type of work: he has served as ZA in Jericho and Colchester.

Amy can work one additional day a week (Mondays best) – she will see how it works and go from there. She has been at her job in New Haven on M/W – currently in the Starksboro Town Office on T/Th for the Asst. Clerk responsibilities. Amy could have more time available when Cheryl's tasks are done, then she can switch over to other ZA duties.

The board reviewed Amy's current scenario: 5-6 hrs/2 days a week. These new tasks would bring up to 20 hrs/wk + 4-5 hrs month for PC. [Dave was working 24 hrs/week – M/W/Th ½ day]

K. Cousino asked if Amy had any concerns about taking a temporary, part-time role. Amy noted that if she needs to take longer than 3 months off from her New Haven job, it could affect her hours there in the long term. If longer than 3 months is needed from her, then she needs a commitment until June/July.

Amy will keep track of agenda requests and communicate with Denny. Previously, Dave set the agendas. Amy noted that family obligations on Thursdays would take precedence, so fill in may be needed with advanced notice.

There is money designated in the Town budget for a ZA assistant, which is unused. Those funds are available as is the money remaining for the ZA's salary that would have been paid.

P. Marsh said it is reasonable that by the beginning of the year (2018), the SB can say whether it needs a longer commitment from Amy and Jeff. Once they are at the interview stage, will come up with a better timeframe. Susan said that New Haven thought it would be a good idea to share the position and offer a fulltime combined position with benefits. They'd like to review candidates together in 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October.

MOTION: Keegan moved to appoint Amy and Jeff to fulfill the duties discussed and as they are able as SB going through process. Tony 2<sup>nd</sup>.

VOTE: All in favor.

Jeff stated that he is willing to serve as temp ZA and will do this short term, but would rather not be in that role in his own town and would discourage the SB from hiring someone in town to fill the position permanently. There are too many conflicts that can arise and best to look outside of Starksboro.

S. Jefferies asked for thoughts on the longer-term approach and hiring process. All agreed the position should be as attractive as possible to get better candidates; that's the idea with shared position. SB would have to work out the details of arrangements (other towns have shared a position, including Richmond/Hinesburg—can get advice/guidance on process and agreements). The Monkton ZA is also likely leaving, so Monkton is also actively looking and could be another idea for sharing the position. S. Jefferies will reach out to Monkton, possibly Huntington. It might be that a better scenario would be to have an admin assistant for the PC/DRB – could learn more about their work and provide more depth.

Options being considered for ZA position:

- (1) Same hours and responsibilities as Dave performed;
- (2) Shared position with another town;
- (3) Extended administrative position with limited, specific ZA duties from someone else; or
- (4) Administrative assistant with ZA position

The board discussed drafting two job descriptions, advertise together, and offer that a combined position would be considered. K. Cousino will ask the PC and DRB for input on the job description(s).

Process: the PC makes recommendation to SB. PC should do interviews first to make recommendations. Résumés to be reviewed by a hiring committee (1 PC, 1 SB, 1 DRB)

Next steps:

- Contact other towns first – phone calls this week Monkton, Huntington, New Haven
  - If interested, Susan can share JD and talk about the town benefits, etc.
- Advertise ZA – draft JDs before next SB mtg

Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder  
Selectboard Assistant