

**Town of Starksboro  
Selectboard Meeting minutes  
April 3, 2018  
UNAPPROVED**

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**Board members present:** Eric Cota, Koran Cousino, Peter Marsh, Keegan Tierney, Tony Porter  
Rebecca Elder (SB Assistant)

**Visitors present:** Tom Estey, Celine Coon, Jason Barnard, Bill Coon

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Chair Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Visitor business: No visitors were present.

**Road Foreman's report:**

- Roads aren't bad yet as the mud hasn't started; still having cold nights.
- Tom ordered some new signs for road work areas.
- Research and bidding continues with Kenworth and Viking about the low-pro truck.
- Tom may attend a May 10 roundtable discussion on stormwater ditching and best practices. Jim Ryan usually leads the talks and is spearheading the permit process. Chittenden County is farther ahead of Addison Co in the process and is looking forward at regional planning. Otter Creek Engineering is working with Tom on our town's work plan. We are mid-stream in planning.
- Stormwater ditching that we've already done should meet specs; we may find there are segments that aren't on the map that need to be addressed as well as segments that are identified on the maps that the Town isn't yet aware of; will need to reassess after DEC has done their assessment.
- MRGP – initial applications are due by 7/31/18 with \$640 for administrative processing and app review fee. After the initial application, the annual operating fee will be \$2000 due on 6/1/19.
- The town has 30 years to complete the work.
- New Municipal Grant in Aid – 186 towns participating. Koran mentioned the presentation heard at the Selectboard institute re: roads. Tom is aware of the program.
- Driveway permit request from Vermont Frames – They want to add more parking and move the driveway up by 15 feet. They plan to swap the location of the drive, maintaining two total accesses. A zoning permit will be needed as well.

**Motion:** Peter Marsh moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion to approve the driveway permit for Vermont Frames. **Vote:** All in favor. (5/0)

- The driveway permit was signed.

*Discussion:* Tony wants to ensure the language is included on the permit application going forward. Board members agreed the form could be more specific and provide information about the standards that need to be met. Tom will send Rebecca the form template for editing. The board discussed updating the driveway permit to make details and requirements clear. The B71 specs cover issues with stormwater run-off into the right of way.

Rebecca will consult the bylaws to ensure the driveway permit form is consistent with local land use regulations. (i.e. Grade/pitch relative to driveways, etc.)

- The Selectboard will review the form for additional changes at a future meeting.

## AC Solid Waste District Report - Susan Reit de Salas

Susan has served as the town representative on the ACSWD for the past couple years. She is happy to serve again. She noted that there has not ever been an alternate appointed and it would be helpful to have an alternate to ensure all district meetings are attended.

- Susan reported that the district is starting to think about a full service drop off center for Addison Co. She asked what the board's thoughts are on this suggestion. A full service drop off means they would take household trash, recycling, and special waste. This range of service is not available currently.
- Since the Hinesburg transfer station closed, residents must drive to Middlebury or Williston for some disposal. Middlebury's site is restricted to special waste but no household waste (there is a local drop off for the latter). A full service drop off would allow for more open hours and a wider range of times for people to drop off. The Middlebury station will not be opening up to household waste because of traffic flow issues on Route 7.
- Composting and food waste - Looking down the road with Act 148 compliance, ACSWD is also thinking about setting up for food waste.
- ACSWD is concerned that some of the smaller waste disposal providers would leave the market. This is possibility to look down the road for future needs. They have received enough interest to warrant a central location. The location is yet to be determined. The board agreed that a central location would be most beneficial. A site in Vergennes or Ferrisburg would be less convenient.
- Eric asked about the storage plans. Would the drop off be covered and protected?
- Tony said it would be a good idea to have a questionnaire at the town garage drop off to collect more input. Susan said a questionnaire was distributed on Front Porch Forum and at town meeting. The board suggested more surveying.
- Koran asked Susan how much food waste is being dropped off at the local site. Are people taking advantage of it? There hasn't been a lot of demand so far. There is no data yet but there has not been an overwhelming response. Anecdotally, many people seem to do backyard composting in our community.
- Tony said they are starting to see some increased self-serve recycling. Susan wasn't aware of this and will collect more information.

**Motion:** Tony Porter moved to reappoint Susan Reit de Salas as Starksboro's representative to the Addison County Solid Waste District. Peter Marsh seconded the motion. **Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

## Starksboro Sports Program request for zoning permit for Cota field

Jason Barnard attended to request that the board sign a zoning permit application for temporary 24" x 36" signs to be attached to the backstops on the baseball and softball fields at Cota field (which is on Town owned land). The banners are being sold to fundraiser for the sports program. They will be placed inward, facing the field, and will not be facing the road. There would be up to 6 banners on each backstop. Peter asked if there is a height restriction for temporary signs. Jason said he would like to have them at roughly 10 ft so that spectators can see the signs when watching games.

- The signs will be vinyl with grommets to allow for easy hanging and removal. They can be put up and taken down each year.
- They would go up end of April and come down by mid-June (end of season).

**Motion:** Tony Porter moved and Eric Cota seconded the motion to approve the signing of a zoning permit application for temporary seasonal signs at the Cota field. **Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

## NEMRC license purchase

Treasurer Celine Coon attended to discuss the purchase of the NEMRC software modules for the upcoming fiscal year. As per voter approval, surplus budget funds will be used to acquire some additional modules including the accounting and payroll tools to replace Quickbooks. Celine said there will be a lot of work to make the transfer but it will be worthwhile, will make reporting easier, and that fund accounting is clearer for the Town's needs in the future. She would like to move forward with the project and requests Selectboard approval for the purchase. NEMRC provided a quote for the modules, set up, and maintenance agreements.

Susan Jefferies continues to be willing and interesting in helping Celine with this work to transfer from the current system to the NEMRC accounting system. She would like to see the work begin soon so that the town will be ready for the new fiscal year starting July 1.

NEMRC can now be used in the cloud. In the current set using a local computer as the NEMRC home base, each day Cheryl must come in and turn on the lister computer as the home base, even when the Listers are not in the office. It is an additional complication and could be avoided if we moved to the Cloud based software. Other towns don't have as much shared use as Starksboro.

- Tony said the board should check in with the Listers before making a final decision and make sure they agree with using the Cloud based version. The board agreed and asked Celine to check with the Listers before the purchase.
- Koran: set up costs - \$10K was the estimated cost mentioned at Town Meeting. Susan was fairly confident that the costs would be less than the estimated amount as it allowed for ample training for people who have much less experience with NEMRC and accounting than the Town employees.
- Celine said the hardest part of the project. will be moving the payroll accounts – and the various funds. Not anticipating a lot of problems but there will be a lot of manual data input.

Celine questions the disaster recovery line –

Celine doesn't think Cheryl wants to do the cash receipts module – no on dog reg and no cash receipts So that's \$2200 that prob won't get spend that they have proposed on the quote.

Koran: conversation with the Listers, comfort with going to the cloud, and discretion about the modules affecting the town clerk

Celine: annual maintenance is already included - will increase to \$1418.26 (from \$750.01)

Cloud adds a level security – also multiple log ins – we don't know what the future holds

**Motion:** Tony Porter moved, with stipulation for Lister approval of the Cloud option, to cover approving the purchase of the NEMRC accounting modules requested by the town staff with the additional \$10 per user for cloud-based, secure access. Keegan Tierney seconded the motion. The purchase is not to exceed the estimated costs as quoted on 2/22/18 by NEMRC.

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

## Contracts & Workers Comp Insurance

Celine said that after the workers' comp audit it was recommended that the town require a formal contract and proof of insurance. The Town is responsible for workers comp insurance for town employees. There is increasing focus on this at the state level and will likely be a priority in the near future. The cost is roughly \$1500 for those who didn't have insurance.

- Koran said many other towns must be in the same situation. There must be a cost/benefit analysis as part of the decision-making process.
- The board wants to ensure safety and professionalism but will need to evaluate how much of a cost increase there would be for a firm that provides insurance in various instances. If the town

went with all professional businesses, the cost may be more and that does not guarantee safety. The rules have changed from a decade ago when a waiver of responsibility was permitted. Last year the Legislature imposed new rules and these standards were mentioned again during the audit.

- Tony said there is only one current multi-year contract (1 year completed of 3). Otherwise he recommends a policy that would be level across the board for all contractors. Self-employed people can get workers comp insurance depending on annual intake, so they would be able to qualify to bid on projects. Current contracts that are already signed are considered binding with terms agreed on and therefore are grandfathered from any new policy.
- Eric asked if the board would require an insurance threshold. Generally the thresholds are very high. Celine has spoken with VLCT and they say this is best practice. They have a prepared packet with examples of the way they want it to be done.
- Keegan asked if the scope is only contractors' coverage or liability as well. (Liability would cover if someone did something on the job that damaged someone else's property.)

There was general agreement that there needs to be a uniform policy.

Keegan said the town should be concerned about the big liability issues – protecting us from the larger claims. Koran and Celine confirmed the town has liability insurance. The deductible is \$1000.

Koran was posing the question about cost/benefit for making changes. Tony agreed there is a difficult balance to achieve: in the short term, it is economical to continue as they have been, but one claim incident will cause everything to go up. Peter asked for VLCT's recommendations so they have something specific to look at.

- Koran will contact VLCT for more information. The board discussion will continue at the next meeting when we have more information. The board wants a legal opinion and to ensure safety.

### Mowing bids:

Whitcomb and Scenic Valley submitted bids. Scenic Valley did the work last year with good reports on their work at the various sites. There will be a slight addition to the lawn area where the berm may be removed at the Town Garage if the power easement right-of-way is granted (Thacher Hurd).

**Motion:** Tony Porter moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion to continue with landscaping from Scenic Valley and accept their bid. **Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

- Tony will be the point person for questions

### Budget review

Things look good with exception of major maintenance. There are funds that need to be expended on the scheduled projects (i.e. porch, vault roof, etc.) Celine did not renew the Quickbooks payroll license (\$750) since she will be making the transition to the NEMRC payroll module.

Logging on town land has been done twice over the last 20 years. Robert Turner says there is some timber to be harvested and it could be close to time to schedule another harvest. Tony spoke with Robert regarding the tap lease. Celine noted that the funds go in/out of the general fund so any income becomes surplus. Tony said they anticipate doing something in the next year.

**Water bill clarification:** The town is not a nonprofit. There is not a municipal rate. The town has 5 buildings – ½ of the library thus the odd number. The preschool is a nonprofit and receives that rate. There is no metering – all residents pay the same and the town buildings are treated as residential. The school pays a different rate (\$900/yr).

Celine Coon and Tony Porter departed at 7:45 p.m.

### Bills/Orders

**Motion:** Keegan Tierney moved and Peter Marsh seconded the motion to pay the bills/orders as presented. **Vote:** All in favor (4/0)

### Minutes of 3/20/18

**Motion:** Peter Marsh moved and Eric Cota seconded the motion to approve the minutes of 3/20/18.  
**Vote:** All in favor (4/0)

### Building maintenance plan

- Porch and roof – Mitch is contracted on the porch. Keegan emailed details to roofing co. Keegan to touch base with Mitch.
- Smoke detectors – Peter will install this week.
- Light on side of Library building – Keegan will try to do it, Peter can help.
- Indoor air quality in town office – air purifier in the listers' office should continue to run; Peter says it would be good get dehumidifier in the crawl space. ±\$350 for a good dehumidifier. Piping would be needed to drain (or it would have to be emptied regularly, which would not be preferable).
- PACIF grant – apply for fall round

### Mail review

Homeward Bound – increase to the annual cost. Koran read from the contract about the option 1 (\$450 + 75 after the first 3 animals) or option 2 – (\$600 no limit; doesn't include rabies quarantine or seized dogs)

**Motion:** Peter Marsh moved that the town approve contract for Option 1. Eric Cota seconded the motion.  
**Vote:** All in favor (4/0)

IC100 training is required for the Selectboard's signature on the Emergency Response Plan. Tony Porter was planning to take the training and will then sign. Eric Cota has completed the training and can also sign if needed.

- Contract to be signed at next meeting.

### Selectboard Concerns

Peter asked about purchasing a dehumidifier. There is fiberglass under the floor and single board floor with no subfloor – all odors come up from the crawl space. Keegan asked if there is a vapor barrier. Peter thinks so. Mitch's estimate was roughly \$2000 and he recommended using spray foam insulation over the entire area. Peter thinks it can be done less expensively. It would be best to get the fiberglass out of there. Koran said the board should be looking at this for the beginning of the fiscal year. Keegan would like to look at it himself and assess. Regarding the dehumidifier, would buy in June depending on funds available. He will need to set up a condensation pump for drainage into basement. Koran suggests they seek input from the Listers' about the air quality, odors, when it gets worse/better, and their preferences for work to be done after assessments.

### Other issues:

- Post office building has mold growing up on the north wall – never gets sun – needs power washing. Does the town have a power washer? Peter to speak with Tony.
- Meeting scheduled for May 8, 2018 at 5:30 to discuss IT and computer planning for the town offices.

Motion to go into Executive Session per 1 VSA Section 313a per 1E and 1F

**Motion:** Peter Marsh moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion to enter executive session.

**Vote:** All in favor. (4/0)

Motion to come out at 8:53 pm.

**Motion:** Peter Marsh moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion to end executive session.

**Vote:** All in favor.

*No action taken.*

**For the retreat on Friday, 4/6/18 at 5:30:**

- Calendar to plan for project dates
- Koran will send the list of annual activities of the board

**Motion to adjourn:** Peter Marsh moved and Keegan Tierney seconded the motion.

**Vote:** All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder  
Selectboard Assistant