

Starksboro Selectboard Special Meeting
Minutes of August 23, 2022
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Nancy Boss, John Painter, Carin McCarthy
Others present: Rebecca Elder

The meeting was called to order by Chair Koran Cousino at 6:01 p.m. at the town clerk's office and via Zoom.

Road Foreman Report

Motion: Nancy moved, Carin seconded motion to proceed with rental of grader at \$12,000/month.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Personnel policy discussion

- Review of notes and comments from Danielle and Rebecca
 - Benefit administration - extensive discussion about how to clearly describe the board's intentions and remove room for interpretation. How to manage the flexibility for salaried employees.
 - Vacation and paid holidays
 - Hours of service (sec. 7) – Town Clerk sets the office hours by statute and the town policy states 32 hours of work are required to be eligible for full benefits.
 - Consider implications of other hours, changes to open hours.
 - If Town Clerk were appointed, then the Selectboard sets the hours.
 - Consider hours for appointed Treasurer and Zoning Administrator and if those must be within the regularly scheduled open hours.
 - Road crew – is there a minimum call-out time; other towns use 2 hrs.; Foreman decides to call in staff. Discussion about appropriate time given the geography of our town and travel time. Eric said when crew is called in, generally they also check the roads at same time. Board decided to start with a 2 hour minimum and can amend in the future as needed.
- VLCT model policy changes will be considered. Rebecca will connect with Jill Muhr for the latest copy of the model policy and any recommendations from VLCT.
- Benefits – John noted that the policy references benefit eligibility for employees and elected officials. Clarification is needed to state that elected officials such as the Town Clerk are eligible for benefits because they sign on to the Town personnel policy. Not all elected officials are eligible and this should be made clear. Improve Sec. 17
- Clarify definition of full-time: 32 hours for office staff and 40 hours for road crew
- Sexual harassment section – See Carin's edited version.
- Addition of temporary employees to policy. All temp employees should sign the personnel policy and it should be on file. Sec. 2 needs to be clarified. Eligibility for benefits describes who is not included. Temp. employees are using town equipment and resources and therefore must be subject to the personnel policy.
- Are personnel files needed for temp. employees? Yes. (Add to system)
- Retirement contributions: There has been ongoing confusion about who is to receive retirement match. The treasurer has interpreted the policy over the years and the application of the policy and match has been inconsistent – some employees have received match and others have not.

- Discussion about set up of the Edward Jones accounts – who is eligible to set up an account, new employees are told they can set up the account but they are not required to do so.
- Who is eligible for the match and when/how is it put in? Will the town offer the 3% even if an employee is not contributing an account? What if an employee declines to participate?
- If an employee must work on a holiday, what is the compensation? Holiday is part of your designated paid time. If road crew is called in on a holiday, what is the compensation?
- Discussion of tracking fringe benefits for salaried employees – Salaried employee is paid the same every week and does receive vacation and holiday days. Employee is paid for the job over the year.
- Salaried employees accrue vacation time and it should be tracked in the system. For road crew, they are front-loaded so they can use vacation during the non-winter months. Discussion about a possible stipend for years with extreme weather conditions. This can be offered at the Selectboard's discretion annually.
- Discussion about bereavement leave and definitions, allowable FMLA leave, etc. Nuances of personal situations that may occur and how to preserve privacy. Continue research on language that could be used, see examples from other states.
- Discussion about CTO vs. sick time/vacation time model – CTO model puts the responsibility on the employee to manage the use of the time. The board is interested in looking at this change for a future revision of the policy.
- Section on discipline and termination – Needs discussion, condensing. Group agrees it should be simple and straight-forward. Steps should be clear and easy to follow. Identify role of supervisor and Selectboard in the process.

Further discussion of changes will continue at a future meeting.

Motion to adjourn: Eric Cota moved at 8:10 p.m.; Carin McCarthy second.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant

Next regular meeting: Tues., Sept 6, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.