

Starksboro Selectboard
Regular meeting
January 25, 2024
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Carin McCarthy, John Painter
Unable to attend: Eric Cota
Others present: Rebecca Elder, Nancy Boss, Amy McCormick, Robert Turner

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Changes to agenda: Addition of Health Officer appointment
Public comment: none

Current Business

Mail review

- CLA information from State of Vermont
- Health Officer recommendation form
- Community Bank audit request from Price-Waterhouse – Nancy to research and complete

Minutes review

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the minutes of Jan. 2 and Jan. 18 as presented. John Painter seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: John Painter made a motion to appoint Luke McCarthy as the Town Health Officer for a 3-year term pending his acceptance. Koran Cousino seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Financial Audit FY22

Ron Smith of RHR Smith & Co. attended via Zoom to present the preliminary FY22 audit findings. The report is positive overall. There were staff and system changes during the FY21-22 year and the effects of those were reflected in the financial systems report from RHR Smith. R. Smith gave an overview of the financial health of the town and summarized the various fund accounts and balances. The final audit report will be prepared and sent to the board in the next two weeks. After the FY22 reconciliation work is completed, staff will begin to prepare for the FY23 audit.

The board and staff agreed that a more extensive presentation would have been helpful and that a letter of feedback will be sent to RHR Smith before engaging in the next audit.

FY24-25 Budget

- The board continued the discussion for the general and highway fund budgets.

- While health insurance costs are a major driver for both funds, the board sees this as a key benefit for town employees and chose not to change what is provided this year. Reports were reviewed and major drivers for increased expenditures in the current year and projections for the next year revised.
- For the past several years, there has been a surplus amount from the previous year to apply toward the total amount of taxes needed to be raised. There is no surplus to apply this year.
- Staff compensation and cost of living increase is anticipated with the budget allowing for up to 5%. The Selectboard will decide on the amount of pay increases at the last meeting of June for FY24-25 and instruct the treasurer at that time.
- Contracted services – Expense needs to be moved for the grader lease payment.

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved to approve Article 4 for \$72,000 for the Fire Equipment reserve fund. John Painter seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: John Painter moved to approve Article 5 for \$119,344 for the Road Equipment reserve fund. Carin McCarthy seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

The board is proposing in Article 6 to change the name of the Paving Reserve Fund to the Road Materials Reserve Fund.

Board members will consider the final budget draft over the weekend and a special meeting will be held on Monday, 1/29, to approve the final budget and warning.

Current Business

Town Office updates: The town report is nearly complete. Amy assembled all information from committees, boards, and community groups. Robert assembled the financial reports and fund balance reports. Rebecca will work on the final production and the report will go to print the first week of February.

No executive session was needed.

Motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. – John Painter moved, Carin McCarthy seconded.
Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder, Town Administrator

Next regular meeting: Feb. 6, 2024 at 6:15 pm