

Starksboro Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of 10/5/21
Unapproved

Board members present: Nancy Boss, Eric Cota, Koran Cousino, John Painter, remote participation: Carin McCarthy
Others present: Mark Kingsley, Karen Leuders

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Koran Cousino.

Changes or Additions

- Update from Road Foreman via email
- MAUSD Lincoln withdrawal vote update (SB concerns)

ARPA Funding Discussion

The board had a broad conversation about how to engage the community and efficiently consider proposals for the use of ARPA funds received by the Town. There are many projects that have potential and the board will need a clear process to navigate the decisions needed.

- Committee formation considerations: The Selectboard will appoint a group of residents to review and assess proposals. There will be 9 members: an invitation to self-nominate will be distributed later this fall. The group will conduct public meetings, have a chair and vice chair, and follow open meeting process. Only one representative per existing town committee or board can participate. If more than 9 people express interest in serving on the committee, a lottery system will be used to select the members. If there aren't enough people coming forward to sit on the committee, the Selectboard will revisit the process.
- The Selectboard will provide information as the framework for considering proposals via a rubric and resources including the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Starksboro Town Plan, and other local and regional planning documents. An FAQ document about ARPA funds will be distributed to help residents think about potential project proposals that meet the criteria and might be considered. Awareness of conflicts of interest is required and objective review is key component of the process. Consideration of impact to cost ratio in the proposal to be considered in the evaluation of project viability.
- The Selectboard noted this is an opportunity to do some of the work outlined in the Hazard Plan that the town would not be able to afford otherwise.
- Ideally, proposals will include a statement that points to specific goals in one of the town planning documents or demonstrates the direct benefit to majority of town residents. The Selectboard will review the proposals vetted by the committee and will provide feedback. The goal is to have a collaborative role to ensure the viability of projects and funding streams.
- RFPs to be considered in rounds, perhaps with 50% of funds available for first round, then two subsequent rounds for 25% of funding. Projects not selected in round 1 can be revised and resubmitted for consideration in round 2. Larger projects – There are limited funds however the board does not want to discourage big thinking. Project assessment will need to include whether funds need to be staged.
- Goal to have committee created after town meeting. Potential funding of projects in one year.

[Carin McCarthy departed.]

Visitor's Business:

Karen Leuders came to speak about the Lincoln vote. She requested consideration of holding a vote within 90-days in the spirit and intent the Union language. She stated it is an easy voting process and no tabulator is needed. Koran emphasized that the board is not in charge of elections, it is the role of the town clerk. Karen has spoken with Amy McCormick and appreciated the chance to speak to the board.

Mail

- United Way is asking towns to waive the signature/petition. Amy noted that there are some new requesting orgs this year. The board agreed that any new orgs should be required to get the signatures (only 15 are required).
- Opioid settlement correspondence
- MAUSD letters received – Amy to forward to MAUSD board
- Lewis Creek Association memorial service in honor of Marty Illick

Financial Updates:

Mark provided the board with a batch of financial reports with budget vs. actuals on the general fund and highway fund. The board reviewed the reports in detail with commentary from Mark highlighting areas to watch as we prepare for budgeting.

Next meeting, the board will take some first steps on budget planning. This will be the start of the process. Mark can provide the actuals as of 9/30. Robert, Mark, and Tom plan to provide a basic proposed budget with some simplification of the expense categories. Tony also plans to revise

Road Crew Hiring Update

An offer has been made and accepted for the road crew position. Employee to start on Monday, 10/18/21.

Hillsboro flooding issue – The issues are occurring on private land. Amy has received calls from a new landowner who observed flooding in her yard and breaching of the banks during storms. The work done last year was under the direction of Jaron Borg, VT State Stream specialist and was limited to removing debris and authorized work only. Questions and concerns should be directed to Agency of Natural Resources. The town cannot alter stream banks.

Selectboard Concerns

- State's Prison Hollow issue – Tony assessed and has decided there is a safety issue. He will install guardrails that extend across the access to the area of concern. Jess Messer to be notified.
- State of VT Standard Grant agreement – The town is agreeing to best management practices and certifies the mileage to enable the town to receive state grant funds.

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to authorize the chair to sign the State of VT Standard Grant Agreement as described. Eric Cota second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Rebecca to draft an employment agreement letter for Steven to include insurance benefit consideration. Amy will provide the packet with personnel policy and other town documents for hiring.

Action Items:

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the warrants for bills, orders, and payroll as presented. Nancy Boss second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: Eric Cota moved to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. John Painter second.
Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder, SB Assistant