

Starksboro Selectboard meeting

November 7, 2023

Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Carin McCarthy, John Painter
Others present: Rebecca Elder (TA), Nancy Boss (Treasurer), Katie Antos-Ketcham, Catherine Goldsmith, Barbara Herrington

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Review of agenda: no changes

Road Report

- FEMA project/Brown Hill East update: Josh was on site today and confirmed the guardrails are installed. Final inspection is required with Jim Cota from VTTrans and then the close-out package will be prepared for State and FEMA review.
- Shaker Hill ditching – Work is being done per Vermont state standards for hydraulically connected segments to ensure ditches are clear and stone lined to minimize road damage during weather events and rainstorms.
- State's Prison Hollow Ext. bridge repair work will be done before Thanksgiving. Residents have been communicated with regarding ingress/egress during the work phase. A steel plate will be set overnight to allow traffic.
- Crushing for stone and gravel will start next week and continue for 9 days.
- The new Town truck arrived at the dealer and will be sent to Viking for outfitting. Discussion about warranty options. Trade in value \$43K. Josh and Eric recommend purchasing extended warranty.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approved the purchase of an extended factory warranty on the new Town truck for an amount of \$14,371. John Painter seconded.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Josh recommended the board consider appointing Paul Porter as the Assistant Road Foreman. Most towns have an assistant who is authorized to make decisions in the Foreman's absence. The board agreed with the concept and will consider further at a future meeting.

Finance Update

Tax collection: Property taxes were collected and any remaining amounts are considered delinquent. A full list will be provided at the next meeting with the refunds to be issued and debt to wipe.

Tax Sale: Scheduled for 11/8/23 on two properties (2657 Ireland Rd and 346 Hillsboro Rd). Several inquiries were received. David Sunshine is the attorney handling the tax sales. Amy McCormick and Rebecca Elder will be present.

Finance and audit update: Brief discussion about the external audit status. Staff will be focusing on preparing for budgeting for FY24-25.

Budget planning:

The group reviewed the calendar for meeting dates through January. Regular meeting dates were adjusted as follows:

Nov. 28	6:30 pm
Dec. 5	6:00 pm
Dec. 20	5:30 pm
Jan. 2	6:00 pm
Jan. 9	6:00 pm
Jan. 25	6:00 pm
Jan. 29 or 31	<i>Tentative if needed</i>

Current Business

Town Administrator Report

- JCCC seeking guidance on staging the project. ARPA funds help cover costs of some initial work on infrastructure and septic system. The Selectboard will need revised cost estimates and projections from the architects to determine how much additional funding is needed. Once that amount is known, the board will consider options including the USDA Rural Development loan program (3% interest), potential investment from group such as the Northern Forest group, or considering a bond request. The board acknowledges it is a challenging time to think of proposing a bond. The townwide reappraisal is still underway. The school district budget is also expected to rise. The board requested the committee proceed with revised estimates to inform the process. More detailed financial projections are needed (i.e. amount for monthly loan payments; impact of a bond vote; etc.)

FEMA project financial close-out

Motion: Eric Cota moved to authorize Rebecca Elder to sign the Contractor's application for payment #3 in the amount of \$276,318, the certificate of completion, and three change orders totaling \$38,355.50 for work on the Brown Hill East bridge project (FEMA). Carin McCarthy second.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously

Warrants

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the warrants for A/P and payroll as presented. John Painter seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Review

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/26, 10/3, and 10/17 as presented. John Painter seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Selectboard Roundtable

- The Pavilion roof will be installed in December.
- Bristol Road Foreman expressed thanks to the Starksboro road crew for coming to help with recent trucking work.
- Carin noted appreciation for the Fire Dept and volunteers for the Trunk or Treat event.

Motion to adjourn: Eric Cota made a motion at 7:57 pm. John Painter seconded.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Town Administrator