

Starksboro Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of 12/7/21
Approved

Board members present: Nancy Boss, Eric Cota, Koran Cousino, John Painter, Carin McCarthy
Others present: Rebecca Elder, Amy McCormick, Robert Turner, Mark Kingsley, Alan Quitner, Susan Klaiber, Brad Johnson, Herb Olson, Margi Gregory

The meeting was called to order at 6:12 p.m. by Koran Cousino.

Changes or Additions

Visitor's Business

Snowmobile usage concerns on Ireland and Conway Roads – Margi Gregory stated that there are several residents who live and own property on Ireland and Conway who are concerned about the potential development of a trail connection by VAST and snowmobile users without permission from the Town. The Selectboard has received several letters from concerned residents. No formal request from VAST has been received. The board will consider the topic at a future meeting after more information is gathered.

Road Foreman's Report - none

MAUSD updates

Herb Olson and Nancy Cornell provided brief updates on the current conversations at the MAUSD board meetings and from the Merger Study Committee meetings. Brad Johnson also offered comments from the merger committee conversations. On 11/17, the board voted to define closure of schools. There has been an acknowledgement of the right of towns to vote on school closure but it is not an "air tight" definition yet. Herb asked the Selectboard to consider writing another letter to the school board and merger study committee regarding Starksboro and Robinson School. The two biggest issues at this time are lack of local control and transportation issues if a merger were to occur. The Selectboard will consider at the next meeting.

Budget discussion

The board continued the budget planning discussion with updates provided by Mark Kinsley and Robert Turner. Mark will research info on a few questions including the water co-op payment schedule and total. Estimates needed for post office building major maintenance items (windows, flooring). Dec. 21 discussion will pick up on the revised projections on the road equipment reserve and the highway budget.

Action Items:

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to authorize payment of VC3 invoice(s) for November and December out of meeting cycle as needed. Eric Cota second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to authorize payment of \$505 for electrical repairs at the library. Nancy Boss second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Discussion: Invoices from the library need to be submitted in a timely way for proper payment and to avoid late fees. Koran to follow up with library trustees.

Motion: John Painter made a motion to appoint Dan Kuzio (Starksboro FD) and Charlene Phelps (Emergency Mgmt Coord.) to the ACRPC Emergency Management committee representing Starksboro and authorizing Koran Cousino to sign on behalf of the board. Nancy Boss second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Jerusalem Community Center Committee Request

Susan Klaiber attended on behalf of the JCCC to ask the Selectboard to its approval to proceed with an application to the DRB for site plan review and set back waiver for the proposed fire station #2 building in South Starksboro. While there has been some discussion about the merits of a different location, the committee recommends the current proposal be evaluated as is. If it is not approved, then alternate plans can be considered as needed. The zoning administrator and PC have stated there may be challenges to the project as is, however the DRB conducts the review and makes the decisions. The Selectboard agreed.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the submission of the application for the proposed fire station #2 project to the DRB for site plan review and set-back waiver request. John Painter second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Rebecca will follow up with Kris Perlee to request review and processing of the DRB application and scheduling of a hearing. Rebecca will assist Susan and the committee with the preparations as needed.

Susan also noted that she has recently reviewed invoices for repairs to the Jerusalem schoolhouse. She said she is fine with reviewing but wanted to ensure the Selectboard is also seeing the information as the JCCC has no authority for approving spending (only making recommendations). The VLCT site visit recommended various safety repairs. The most important is addressing the potable water issue that needs a permanent solution. Due to COVID-19 precautions, there will be no Hunters' Breakfast again this year so no gatherings are in the near future. Safety of the swings also needs to be addressed. The front steps need handrails.

Warrants

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

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to payments for tax credits and overpayments as presented by the Treasurer. Carin McCarthy second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: John Painter made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/17 with corrections as noted. Carin McCarthy second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Cota Rec Field Grant

Lewis Creek Association needs two town representatives to assist with review of grant related documents and to attend meetings when needed. The board designated Rebecca Elder and Eric Cota to serve in this capacity. Rebecca will coordinate with Kate Kelly for meeting scheduling and admin.

Request for Story Walk signs on Cota trail

The library and conservation commission requested permission to post temporary signs for a story walk along the Cota nature trail. The board approves and asks that the signs be maintained and removed when project is over.

Mail Review

Bristol Rescue sent a request for support via use of ARPA funding for various new equipment that is needed including an ambulance and radio upgrades. They are asking towns for a combined total of \$390K.

Health precautions and COVID-19 status update

The board briefly discussed the current health conditions, case numbers in Vermont, and what municipalities need to consider to balance protecting staff members health and exposure conditions with

maintaining services and being open to the public in our town buildings. No decision on mask requirements. The board is aware of our town's small staff that the major incapacitation that would occur if more than one member of the staff were to become ill and unable to come to work. Signs on doors of town buildings should note that the town strongly recommends and encourages visitors to wear masks/face coverings.

Next meeting agenda:

Consider snowmobile trail issues and research statute. There is information on the DMV site. A local ordinance is a tool that can be used for regulation as well.

MAUSD – consider drafting letter to the Merger Study Committee and MAUSD board

Future agenda:

Personnel Policy review re: CTO, vacation and holiday pay language – needs clarification

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

Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder, SB Assistant