

Starksboro Selectboard meeting  
March 20, 2024  
Unapproved

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**Board members present:** Koran Cousino, Carin McCarthy, John Painter, David Schmidt

Unable to attend: Eric Cota

**Others present:** Rebecca Elder, Amy McCormick, Adam Lougee (ACRPC), Herb Olson, Dennis Casey, Nancy Cornell, Alice Weston, Rich Warren

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Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Remove Road Foreman's Report

### Visitor's Business

Herb Olson attended to discuss Village Center Designation. Dennis Casey and Herb met to talk community growth and support for Robinson School. The State program for village centers offers some opportunities for funding that Starksboro is not currently eligible for. In addition, there are discussions at the legislature about various changes to Act 250, to conservation planning statewide, and other housing related initiatives that will affect our local bylaws and implementation of regulations from regional and state levels. Herb and Denny asked for the Selectboard's permission to pursue further information about the process and application preparation. The Selectboard expressed its general support to outline a plan and clarify how this designation would benefit Starksboro's long term goals. Communication and updates should flow through Rebecca for coordination. Rebecca and Nancy will work with Herb to gather information and documentation in support of the application if the town pursues that path.

### MTAP funding options

Adam Lougee, Executive Director of Addison County Regional Planning Commission, attended to talk with the Selectboard about the MTAP program and potential for Starksboro to apply for funds to support planning work. The funds are available first-come, first-served. Starksboro is a second-tier town and is now eligible. Other Addison Co. towns that have applied and received funding are Salisbury, Bridport, and Shoreham. Project types included water infrastructure, housing community recovery, recreation, etc.

- This program is a process to get State awarded ARPA funds to the towns, which is in addition to the direct award to the town.
- The Town of Salisbury received \$100,000 from MTAP for a proposal that combined engineering design work, capacity study of water and wastewater, architectural services, and support for a grant writer. ACRPC will provide financial administration services for \$2000.
- Adam noted this is not "shovel in the ground money" but is aimed at planning.
- For MTAP, there is no penalty if the work doesn't get done and there is no town matching grant requirement.
- The Town of Shoreham is doing a market study about housing market - specific to a parcel of land. Addison Housing Works can use that demand model to try to pursue VFHA funds to work towards mid income.

Other funds available: Up to \$10K small regional planning grants. Rebecca will follow up with Adam. The Selectboard will consider and have a discussion at the next meeting to consider an application for MTAP funding.

## Annual Town Appointments

### *Slate of new candidates*

Alice Weston – Alice grew up in Bristol, has a natural resources interest, enjoys foraging, and wants to support the Conservation Commission on interfacing with 4 Winds at Robinson for the science curriculum.

Rich Warren – Rich lives in Starksboro and serves in other roles. He is interested in being a lister because there has been a vacancy and he does not want to see the town eliminate elected lister positions in favor of an assessor model. He would serve a one-year term to learn the role and then could run for an open seat in 2025.

Herb Olson – Herb lives in Starksboro. He withdrew his interest in serving as a delegate and supported Rich Warren continuing in the role at least through June 30, 2024. Herb is willing to serve in the future or as an alternate.

Slate of Candidates for consideration:

- Maple Broadband – Nancy Cornell, Richard Warren (alt)
- ACSWMD – Susan Jefferies
- Tree Warden – Josh Martell
- Fire Wardens – Tom Estey, Tony Porter
- Energy Committee – Richard Warren (1 yr), Megan Nedzinski (2 yr)
- Development Review Board - Ben Campbell (3 yrs), one vacancy remaining
- Conservation Commission – Robert Turner, Jan McCleery, Peg Casey, Alice Weston

**Motion:** John Painter made a motion to approve the slate of candidates for annual appointment to town positions as listed above. Carin McCarthy seconded.

**Discussion:** Herb Olson is appointed as an alternate for ACRPC. Alice Weston's term is 4 years on the Conservation Commission. The other CC terms will be staggered – Rebecca to follow up with CC Chair.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

Other appointments will be made a future meeting.

## Current Business

### **New private road name proposed: Maple Hill Drive**

Location: VT Route 116 north of village on right side headed north; private road required as part of approved subdivision

**Motion:** Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the creation of Maple Hill Drive as a private road in Starksboro. John Painter second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

### Town Office Updates

Town Clerk – MAUSD budget revote planning has been time-consuming. Amy has attended MAUSD meetings and communicated regularly with the other town clerks in the district and the superintendent's office. The revote will take place on April 16. The location will be the Town Clerk's office not Robinson School for this vote. Informational meeting(s) will be hosted by the MAUSD.

Zoning – Applications are coming in steadily for new construction projects as we approach spring. There are 3 DRB applications in the queue.

Finance – The FY22 audit is nearly completed. Nancy, Rebecca, and Robert are working with NEMRC and RHR Smith to close out adjusting journal entries that were recommended in the audit findings.

Preparation and scheduling for the FY23 audit will begin soon with the goal of completion by end of August.

## Warrants

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the warrants for A/P and payroll as presented. David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

## Minutes

Motion: John Painter made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/12/24 as presented. Koran Cousino seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

## Mail review

1. MRGP

**Motion:** Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the annual Municipal Roads General Permit application pending confirmation from Road Foreman of completion of required work and authorize Koran Cousino to sign the MRGP. John Painter second. **Motion approved unanimously.** Rebecca will contact Josh for confirmation.

2. Budget Status report

3. Request for approval of liquor and tobacco license – Distant Thunder LLC – for action at next meeting on 4/2

## Selectboard Roundtable:

- Dan Kuzio has organized a brief update on the emergency management planning statewide for the eclipse event and viewing. Tom Estey, Cheryl Estey, Charlene Phelps, Rebecca, and Amy will participate. The board will decide on public messages for the website and Facebook at the 4/2 meeting.
- Carin noted that the board planned to return to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement conversation and discussion. The group agreed to begin the discussion at the next meeting and consider approval at a future meeting.
- Conflict of Interest: Rebecca provided copies of the COI policy, written in 2010, that is to be signed annually. The board will review and discuss at the next meeting and consider if any updates are needed.

## Next agenda:

1. MTAP funding – plan for an application
2. Retreat planning
3. COI policy review and discussion
4. DEI discussion

Dennis Casey asked for clarification on the Planning Commission can have input on the MTAP funding conversation. The board will be considering a variety of projects that may fit the MTAP model and ideas should be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

Motion to adjourn 7:34 p.m.: John Painter moved, Carin McCarthy seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Elder, Town Administrator