

Starksboro Selectboard meeting
April 16, 2024
Approved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, John Painter, David Schmidt, Eric Cota
Unable to attend: Carin McCarthy
Others present: Nancy Boss, Josh Martell

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

Adjustments to the Agenda: none

Visitor's Business none

Road Foreman's Report

- Request for removal of wood that was left from the pavilion roofing project – Josh will take the remaining wood planks and 2x4s to store at the garage for future use.
- Truck update: there were some items that were not a part of the truck order and were not included in the quote; cameras were added per the insurance company request. Cost increase to \$86K from \$81K. Truck should be in by end of May.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the additional items for the truck order in the amount not to exceed \$5000. David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Budget review:

- FEMA project \$460K was the major driver
- Parts are over budget due to equipment repairs – motor repair was paid from emergency reserve
- Is parts/repairs being underbudgeted? Does the equipment repair/replacement schedule need to be reevaluated for shorter equipment life?
- Do not want to make decisions based on keeping the funds solvent – prepare in advance with review of replacement schedule and recommendations for changes.
- More repairs are being done in house so therefore more time is being spend in the shop instead of on the roads.

MTAP Grant proposals

Proposal 1 – Starksboro Village Water Coop – Request for support for preliminary engineering study, surveying and studying to address leaks and assess capacity. Request includes the PER and funds to support the implementation.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to proceed with proposal #1 for MTAP funds in the amount of \$50,000 for support for the Starksboro Village Water Coop as described. David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Proposal 2 – Town Hall accessibility planning – ADA compliance exploration for a comprehensive plan for the Town Hall building, to support a grant writer to pursue a VCDP block grant for ADA planning, and leverage use of local ARPA funds already committed to the project.

Motion: David Schmidt made a motion to proceed with proposal #2 for MTAP funds in the amount of \$35,000 for support for the Town Hall accessibility project. Eric Cota seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

DEI Statement discussion

Discussion included a range of topics including what the purpose of that statement is and how it may be perceived by a variety of people. Eric stated he agrees with the content in the statement but struggles with telling people how to treat others. Board members have heard some feedback from community members with questions of why the town may adopt the statement. Ultimately, any negative actions from individuals in the community are the responsibility of that individual and consequences would be dealt with by law enforcement. John said adopting the statement is a way for the town to be clear that it is a welcoming place for all people—visitors, new residents, and existing residents. It is an acknowledgement and taking an active stance in welcoming people to the community. Simply adopting the statement does not create change but it does recognize that Starksboro is an open place that welcomes everyone.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to adopt the proposed statement of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. John Painter seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Current Business

Town updates: Nancy reported finance and zoning work was going well. No major items to report. Rebecca is on vacation this week and Amy on vacation the following week.

Scenic Valley quote received for town mowing for all buildings – Request to include the pavilion area

Quote received from Dan Gebo for a 3-year contract for mowing of the Cota recreational fields.

Motion: John Painter made a motion to approve the Cota field mowing contract in the annual amount of \$3695 for 3 years. David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Warrants

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

Mail review

- Letter from RHR Smith about improvements planned for auditing services
- Letter of engagement for FY23 audit

Selectboard Roundtable:

Road concerns: A board member said they have been approached about road complaints and issues. Discussion about road grading, possible causes of issues that have been more significant this year, and other maintenance issues. Road crew members have different styles of maintenance and the foreman's responsibility is to ensure consistent care for the roads. Resident feedback should be communicated to the road foreman to be addressed. Sap hauling has an impact on several unpaved roads, including Ireland Road. Potholes, ruts, and grading continue to be an issue. The foreman generally checks the roads 1-2x per week unless a complaint is received as time allows.

Motion to adjourn 6:35 p.m.: Eric Cota moved, David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder, Town Administrator