

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 4/18/23
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Carin McCarthy, John Painter, Nancy Boss, Eric Cota
Others present: Rebecca Elder, Julie Bessette, Amy McCormick, Susan Thompson, Katie Antos-Ketcham

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5: 35 p.m.

The agenda was reviewed – addition of discussion with Library reps re: grant application due 5/1.

Visitor's Business - none

Financial Systems

Treasurer Julie Bessette attended and gave updates on internal system implementation. Internal auditing of the checking register has been completed through February 2023. Auditor Laurie Webber is reviewing regularly.

Monthly reconciliation review is needed. Julie will present documents showing the bank account vs. NEMRC accounting reports. There is a current difference which the auditors are working to resolve. Julie will keep the board and Rebecca informed.

Annual stipends for various town roles – Board agreed these should be disbursed on an annual basis by the Treasurer as approved in the budget.

IRS discrepancy shows an overpayment but does not align with payroll records. Julie will clarify with IRS in May.

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the proposal from RHR Smith & Co. for a one-year audit of FY23 in the amount of \$10,950 as presented. John Painter seconded. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Addison County Sheriff

AC Sheriff Elmore visited with the board to hear about current work in Starksboro. Topics included speed monitoring in the village and on some Class 3 road areas. The sheriff's office is now fully staffed with 4 full-time members. They are also able to log some time for the State highway monitoring. Additional attention will be given to varied hours including morning and evening commuter hours, especially when the school is opening/closing.

Current Business

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the warrants for A/P and payroll as presented. Eric Cota seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: John Painter moved to approve the increase in federal milage rate to \$.65 for reimbursements. Eric Cota seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the minutes of 3/21/23 as presented. Eric Cota seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: John Painter moved to approve the minutes of 4/4/23 as presented. Carin McCarthy seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Zoning Administrator Appointment

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission to appoint Nancy Boss as the Zoning Administrator.

Eric Cota seconded. Motion approved unanimously. (N. Boss recused)

Town Administrator Update

Considering June 3 for a community engagement event to coincide with a potential event by the Meetinghouse. Rebecca will talk with interested groups and confirm. A small community grant from the MERP program could be applied for if there is a significant educational component related to energy goals and awareness.

Grant funding – Library discussion above. Rebecca will develop a proposed flow chart and process for grant applications and prospecting for funds for use on town buildings or properties. This will also consider how to increase communication with committees and stakeholders such as the library, Meetinghouse, Preschool, and others.

Zoning and DRB update – Increasing number of inquiries and permit applications. Amy and Rebecca have been working together to process permits. Nancy will now come in at least once a week to review applications and proposals, sign permits, and respond to messages. Rebecca will serve as Acting ZA and she and Amy will continue assisting and researching.

Rental space – Lease draft received legal review previously. Rebecca will update the lease for the new proposal. Pete Antos-Ketcham contact Koran to thank the Town for use of the rental space for garden and food share processing and storage. He is looking for alternate space. The group discussed a variety of options to offer as alternatives for storage for both the Food Shelf and NCP. Rebecca will meet with Pete and Barbara, tour the building, and determine how to proceed.

Library fundraising request:

Susan Thompson met with Rebecca to discuss grant funding opportunities for the library and process for applying and communication. Susan noted that an application for a cultural facilities grant due on May 1 would require a 1:1 match. Rebecca invited Susan and Katie Antos-Ketcham to attend the board meeting to discuss this requirement.

1. A letter of support from the Town was requested.
2. The grant is for \$30K with 1:1 match. 50% of the town's match can be provided in well-documented in-kind labor. There are some local contractors who have offered pro bono work that can be considered.
3. The funds, if awarded, would not be received until the project is completed there for the Town needs to front the money for the work.
4. Other grant funds the library receives can be used for the match (but not State funds).
5. If funds are received, the town can't apply to this source for 3 years.

The board asked questions about timing, process, and when they would hear about other applications. PTV notice on 5/1. ALA this week. ARPA applications tbd. The board stated the town budget does not have the capacity to match the grant and front the funds for the project. Future applications should be discussed with Rebecca to ensure timelines and grant requirements are understood before applications are submitted. Susan will keep in touch with Rebecca.

Motion: John Painter moved and Nancy Boss seconded to proceed with the CFG grant application for library renovation with withdrawal if we do not have a matching fund source secured one week prior to the application date of August 31, 2023. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Selectboard Roundtable

Discussion about pull-off on State's Prison Hollow. Monkton doesn't use in the summer (it is in Monkton on town line). Land is owned by Steve and Sylvia Hansen. Eric will speak with them to request permission to block off for the summer to prevent illegal parking and trash dumping. Continue discussion at next meeting for follow up.

FEMA buyouts – Ask RPC what happens if a buyout occurs. Is the structure removed or left (assuming not a mobile or transportable house)?

Executive Sessions

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved that based on the advice of counsel, the Selectboard hereby finds that premature general public knowledge involving confidential attorney-client communications including professional legal advice concerning a complaint of unpermitted land development, would clearly place the public body at a disadvantage in probable civil litigation to which the Town of Starksboro may be involved. John Painter second.

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved to enter executive session with counsel and Rebecca Elder to consider professional legal advice and confidential attorney-client communications from counsel involving a complaint of unpermitted land development. Eric Cota second. (7:25 p.m.)

Motion: Eric Cota moved to exit executive session at 7:55 p.m.: John Painter second. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved to enter executive session per 1 VSA S313a3 personnel and/or contract negotiations with Rebecca Elder present. John Painter second. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion to exit executive session at 8:03 p.m.: Carin McCarthy moved, John Painter second. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion to adjourn at 8:04 p.m.: John Painter, Eric Cota second. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Town Administrator