

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 6/1/21
Approved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Nancy Boss, Eric Cota, John Painter
Unable to attend: Carin McCarthy
Others present: Rebecca Elder, Robert Turner, Chris Runcie, Tony Porter

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Koran Cousino.

Changes or Additions: none

Visitor's Business: none

Road Foreman's Report

- Plans to repave the Post Office parking lot – The estimated cost is \$22K and the repair is needed badly and prior to winter plowing.
- Tony requested confirmation of the road reserve fund balance and that the transfer for paving of Hinesburg Hollow was made as approved by the Selectboard. The fund should have \$37K remaining.
- FEMA: Brown Hill bridge project work is likely slated for 2022. Tony will receive a timeline update by end of week.
- VLCT insurance inspection was completed last week. Tony and Rebecca were present. A few items were noted and all have been addressed already except for a weight limit sign for the mezzanine. Information is expected shortly to complete that item.
- Tony completed a road tour with Mike Winslow of ACRPC. Tony noted that some towns in Chittenden Co. are receiving twice the funds Starksboro gets and that it is worth asking how the funds are assigned and if the town can be considered for additional funding due to the amount of unpaved roads to maintain.
- Segments for hydraulically connected road work identified for this year: Mason Hill S and Mason Hill N (part is in Class 4 section)
- Update provided on Better Back Roads re: embankment on Ireland Rd.
- Tony expressed concerns regarding the process and duration for foreman's annual review, compensation discussion, and follow through.
- Summer road work and grant opportunities have short window. Koran stated the board will focus on what is possible and affordable. The board will revisit once new treasurer can provide financial information to inform the board's assessment and action.
- Tony inquired about potential funds from COVID related infrastructure investments. The board will be considering when more information is available and will engage in a deliberate process to look at the broad range of opportunities for infrastructure improvements of all kinds. The board plans to bring in stakeholders for input.
- Request from David Allen: Sap line easement to cross the town property by the gravel pit. Tony would prefer not to have another storage container there not to have lines crossing the area. Questions to consider include whether this would be allowed by VT Land Trust, where the lines would run, etc. The board needs a formal proposal, with a plan and map showing placement, and a site visit would be needed before any decision can be made.

Grant application for Cota Field assessment

The board reviewed a draft grant application prepared by the Lewis Creek Association to address water and drainage issues related to the Lewis Creek and the Cota field property. Discussion included why this approach is being considered now. There is no financial burden to the town and this would provide an engineering study that would allow for future funding opportunities to address the issues and implement solutions. LCA staff would administer the grant. Chris Runcie, LCA board member, stated that stormwater and water quality is the priority of the grant and the benefit is to find the best solutions for multiple uses of the property and water protection.

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the grant application to Watersheds United for a design and implementation block grant. John Painter second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Koran also briefly updated the group on the Cota bridge repair process that should be underway in July. The Conservation Commission is also conducting an effort to eradicate poison parsnip on the property. It is a multi-year commitment.

COVID19 protocols

All agreed that moving to in-person meetings later in the summer is preferable, with the option for participating remotely for board members or the public. The board will consider taking this step in July. For now, mask expectations are still in place consistent with the Governor's orders and CDC recommendations for indoor gathering.

Administrative Updates

- The town website redesign is nearly complete for phase one. It is being tested for compatibility on all screen sizes and content is being uploaded. It will be ready to launch shortly. Rebecca provided a preview to the board and will distribute a test link for review.
- IT: Two laptops will be purchased to replace older machines. Rebecca will work with VC3 to have new laptops set up for both the Treasurer and the Road Foreman, including archiving all data and transfer.
- Financial report: Robert Turner provided the board with a balance sheet and supporting information to begin assessing year-end, final purchasing needed, and status of the budget. Overall the budget is in good shape with some areas exceeding predictions and others well under budget. Due to the pandemic conditions, spending was adjusted to current needs.
 - Mark Kinsley will begin on June 9. He will have an orientation meeting with Robert and they will work together on the journal entries recommended by the audit from Telling & Assoc. Robert will review the audit and entries prior to the meeting.
- Pottery Studio is vacating the town building. A walk through will be scheduled by Nancy with Judith Bryant and the keys will be returned.

Warrants for Bills, Orders, and Payroll

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the warrants for bills, orders, and payroll as presented by the Treasurer. Koran Cousino second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Review

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 5/18 and 5/25 as presented. Koran Cousino second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Appointment of Treasurer

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to appoint Mark Kinsley to the position of Town Treasurer effective June 9, 2021. John Painter second.

Vote: 3 yes (KC, NB, JP) and 1 no (EC)

Discussion included the need for a clear job description, schedule expectations, etc. Mark will work on Monday afternoon and Wednesday morning, and will add a 3rd day in September. VLCT has provided some information about the requirements. The Treasurer may appoint an assistant, which must be done in cooperation with the Selectboard regarding number of hours and pay rate. An assistant is not required.

Animal Control policy review – Postponed due to time limitations

Personnel Policy review

The board considered only one clarifying change to the policy regarding the accumulation of vacation time for employees in their first year. There was a calculation error that resulted in confusion.

Page 7, section 19, Vacation Leave

0-1 years of service = annual accrual rate

CHANGE TO: 4 hours per month up to max. of 40 hours

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the Personnel Policy with one change to vacation accrual rate as noted above. Eric Cota second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Discussion of when the policy change is effective. Rebecca will confirm with VLCT that notice is not required and will confirm process for employee notification.

Next agenda:

Animal control ordinance – 15 min.

JCCC review charge with committee – 15 min.

Executive Session – personnel

Year-end budget report

DRB appointments

Maple Broadband alternate appointment

Motion to adjourn: Nancy Boss made the motion at 8:26 p.m. John Painter second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Elder
SB Assistant