

Starksboro Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of August 16, 2022
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Nancy Boss, John Painter, Carin McCarthy
Others present: Josh Martell, Pete Antos-Ketcham, Barbara Herrington

The meeting was called to order by Chair Koran Cousino at 6:01 p.m. at the town clerk's office and via Zoom.

Additions/Adjustments:

1. Discuss tenant in town clerk parking lot
2. Special meeting dates

Road Foreman Report

- Paving project on State's Prison Hollow – quote received for \$4500
- Town office parking lot – check if any more lines for water/power are needed before paving
- Post office – Paving planned for fall
- Requests from Preschool - Want parking signs, no smoking signs, speed bumps? Can be temp but not in the winter (plowing) – have a meeting with the SCP to discuss what the needs are – invite Susan or Star to future meeting.
- Dan Sargent project – 2 quotes received, neither includes culverts. Town has received an ACRPC grant to cover \$17K of costs and the town is responsible for 20% match. Josh is unsure of status of culverts that had been ordered by Tony months ago and is following up with vendors. Calls are not being returned. He might have another source if needed.
- Quaker St – Required ditching work to be done; town received matching ACRPC grant
- Ben Roberts project (FEMA) – pre-bid meeting and site visit was held today. 6 contractors showed up with interest; bids are due 8/31. Otter Creek Eng. is managing the bids.
- Grader Update – Grader still at Nortraxx, rear end replacement would cost \$45K with labor and parts; other repairs are \$35K, (worth \$65K as is) Transmission replacement cost \$25K+;
 - Cost of new grader is 589K+ (current attachments would fit/can be retro fit). 269K with the trade-in and monthly lease credit.
 - Repairs to date were cut off at \$15K.
 - Anticipated costs:
 - Rent/lease a grader = \$12K/mo to own.
 - Tires = \$20K (not needed yet)
- New truck on order to arrive in Dec. est. (authorized last year)
- Mack needs to go in the shop – clutch problems and likely needs to be replaced.
- Carin asked about the maintenance schedule for all town vehicles and equipment: Josh will perform/schedule on an hour usage basis. Josh will maintain records at the garage and per vehicle.
- When hiring in the future, board requested a road test be conducted to ensure skills exist for necessary equipment (i.e. manual shift, plowing, etc.).
- The board was not ready to make a decision tonight on purchase of grader. They will consider further for the next meeting.

Motion: Nancy moved, Carin seconded motion to proceed with rental of grader at \$12,000/month.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Food Shelf Requests

Barbara Herrington and Pete Antos-Ketcham came with some updates and check on the food shelf and Food Share programs. Barbara and Pete have been working together in their respective programs that serve the same population and are meeting needs in the local community. The Little Free Pantry has been well used. The Food Shelf has had good support from the community from volunteers and donors. They asked for permission to collaborate as needed to continue providing services. The Selectboard supports this collaboration and sharing of resources and funds raised for food programs.

Warrants

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

Schedule review

Special meetings:

- 8/23 Personnel policy and Town Admin position if time
- 9/13 – 6:30 pm

Discussion re: posting open positions

- ZA role – Town has job description and ad from past posting. Review at next meeting and finalize. Determine number of hours and any adjustments to responsibilities.
- Consider whether to combine ZA and new Town Administrator (TA) position. Koran asked if the TA/ZA jobs could be done in 32 hours/week for full-time. Eric estimates 20-25 hours a week depending on what the focuses are. Carin wants a better understanding of the TA job description before seeing if the skills and experience for both positions are compatible. This combining of roles would also depend on how much work the selectboard members have capacity to do themselves vs. needing support for a range of tasks. Eric hopes the TA will do grant writing and seek out new grants that can fit projects that are needed and already identified in town (i.e. road projects proposed by Foreman, community programs, structure improvements, energy upgrades, etc.). In Bristol, the TA is proactive in the process. TA also provides support for the SB, messaging, emails, coordination of projects. Continue discussion on 9/13.
- The board is not ready to post the Treasurer position. There has been one interested candidate. Board will consider posting in September with a start date in Oct/Nov to allow some overlap for training.
- Clear definition of boundaries for new hires are needed; well-defined job descriptions.
- John suggested talking with Danielle about including onboarding training for new hire before she finishes in Nov/Dec.

Preparation for personnel policy discussion

- Eric provided a copy of a social media policy from Bristol for reference.
- Carin edited the sexual harassment section – shared with the group for review.
- Bring comments from Danielle and Rebecca to next meeting re: benefit administration, vacation, etc. (clarifying items for implementation for payroll and benefits)
- Carin suggested adjusting language throughout for inclusivity – changing he/she to “the employee” or they/them.
- Koran will review and bring notes from Monkton and New Haven policies.
- VLCT model policy changes to be considered to incorporate.

VLCT Conference in October 6-7, 2022 – Ask if Rebecca is available to attend.

Selectboard Roundtable

- Discussion of RV camper and car parked in the commuter lot. Board discussed policy, signage needed, and how to handle situation now and in the future. Town staff is not to approach the vehicle(s). Law enforcement will be contacted to talk with the individuals and give notice to vacate within 24 hours and to use judgement whether escort off property is necessary.
 - Koran will contact AC sheriff for assistance.
 - No overnight parking sign has been ordered.
- Tree behind Meetinghouse – Peg and Carin spoke with Leslie Rublee about permission to remove dead large maple. Wood can go to the community wood bank and chips to the community garden. Carin will follow up with Nick Bissonnette regarding the wood processing for the wood bank.

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve hiring John Stetson to remove the tree fee not to exceed \$800. John Painter second. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

- **Community event** – Carin raised the idea of a fall event and if the board would be interested in collaborating with other community groups for a potential event on Oct. 15. Tentative mid-to-late afternoon time. Vision is an outdoor event with the pavilion space and walking to events at the Meetinghouse, Library, etc.
- **Post office** – The concrete pad on accessible ramp deteriorating and needs fixing; Nancy and Eric to follow up; Koran will contact the PO general in Huntington to discuss work.
- **Rooted VT event follow up** – Eric called the State police but hasn't received a return call. People have reported that driving travel on Big Hollow, Shaker Hill, and from Ireland Rd.

Dan Sargent road work – Bids received from two contractors. Koran Cousino recused from the conversation. Work is for ditching and riprap, not guardrails. Dennis Casey Excavating \$23K Free Guard Excavation \$20K. Discussion included experience of contractors, knowledge of work and road. John said he would prefer to see references for new contractors, Free Guard is a new business in the area.

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the bid from Dennis Casey for \$23,000. Eric Cota second. **Vote:** Motion approved EC, NB, JP, CM. KC recused.

Additional information to consider about grader:

There could be a 3-month wait to get an axle for the grader. Cost is \$45K.

Motion to adjourn: Eric Cota moved at 7:53 p.m.; Carin McCarthy second.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant