

Starksboro Selectboard meeting  
Aug. 6, 2024  
Approved

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

**Others present:** Rebecca Elder, Amy McCormick, Nancy Boss, Luke McCarthy, Tom Estey, Sheila Knight, Lisa Roscoe, Peggy Adams, Theresa Gile, Andrew L'Roe

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Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. at the Starksboro Town Clerk's office.

**Review agenda:** none

**Visitor's Business:** none

## Road Update

- Robert Young Road – A grant for ditching portions must be completed before October. The entire road will need ditching and culverts in future.
- Gravel stock – A lot of stock has been used to address the storm damage. The town will need to purchase additional gravel in the future.
- Quaker St. needs a culvert – Crew was planning to install right before the flood but it was delayed/washed out. Josh will complete his work before Sept. when the Bristol town road work will begin.
- Koran has been listening to the VEM weekly updates and updated the group on key points.
- Ireland Rd. scope of work – Town contracted out for ditching, culverts need cleaning again; plan to replace culvert by Lyons with 30" (instead of 18")

## Setting of municipal and local tax rates

**Motion:** Eric Cota made a motion to set \$0.4304 as the municipal portion of tax rate. David Schmidt seconded. **Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

**Motion:** John Painter moved to make the .0110 veterans exemption. Eric Cota second.  
**Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

**Motion:** Eric Cota made a motion to set the homestead late filing penalty at 8%. Carin McCarthy second.  
**Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

### Jerusalem Fire Station #2

Tom Estey has limited time in the near future so Luke McCarthy is taking the lead on this project. Parent Construction has given an estimate for concrete.

### Capital maintenance

- Heat pumps need to be replaced in several buildings: garage #1, food shelf #2, town clerk #3
- Food shelf roof - needs quotes - tree removal from behind building will help with moisture issues. John will look at the trees and see what needs to be done.

### **FEMA Buyout Discussion**

- Town would need to hold the land in perpetuity if a landowner opts for the buyout process.
- Town must consider the impact for the town, then submit proposals to the state, which will include costs of demo and removal, and restoration.
- If a property is in the buyout, it will come off the grand list (loss of tax revenue).
- Bristol has taken on some properties from buyouts and would be a resource for information.
- The land becomes town land, similar to the town forest. It must remain as open space (no development).
- KC asked about liability and issues if the town had a parcel in between residences that stay
- (Flood resilient communities - Middlebury example - took 3 yrs)
- Bristol example - old tin city, now green space and somewhat maintained (mowing 3x yr)

### **Mail Review**

1. Email received from Bob Gifford re: roads: Stokes Hill - Class 4 - gully erosion and town is responsible. Clifford Tree farm hired a contractor do work privately and a private donation made to cover the gravel costs of the town. Town tandem hauled the gravel (cost for the town). Similar situations on Class 4 roads have been considered by the Selectboard on an as needed basis.

### **Selectboard Roundtable**

1. Carin is working on a document for emergency planning - she'd like templates or comparables from other similar sized towns.
2. Carin will not be here for primary. She asked about volunteers and building excitement around the election.
3. BCA - site liability – discussion about if a waiver or statement of waiver is required.
  - a. VLCT is a resource
  - b. What does the town need to consider? What is legally required?
  - c. Carin will follow up with VLCT
4. Koran noted there is a tree across Lewis Creek that is near the dry hydrant.
  - a. The board will ask Jeff Parent if it can be pulled down safely.

**Motion:** Eric Cota moved to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. John Painter second.

**Vote:** Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder, Town Administrator