

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 9/1/20
Approved

Board members present: Eric Cota, Koran Cousino, Nancy Boss, John Painter, Greg Hahr

Others present: Rebecca Elder, Tony Porter, Amy McCormick, Cheryl Estey, Robert Turner, Elise Shanbacker, Polly Nichol, Reed Cousino, Penny Weightman, Robin Fleming, Pam Emmons

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Koran Cousino.

The introductory statement regarding open meeting law and how public meetings are being conducted in the Town of Starksboro due to the State of Emergency declared by Governor Scott as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to Addendum 6 to Executive Order 01-20 and Act 92, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

In accordance with Act 92, there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously, however the meeting was conducted with public access via internet or telephone with the ability to listen/interact contemporaneously.

Additions to the agenda:

1. AOT final MOU for EVSE grant matching funds
2. Hydraulic study info. from Otter Creek Engineering

Visitor's Business

Addison County Community Trust Exec. Director Elise Shanbacker and Polly Nichol, consultant, attended to seek further information from the Selectboard about their decision to discontinue the application for the VCDP community development grant in support of infrastructure assessments in the 3 mobile home parks owned by ACCT in Starksboro. They asked for clarity about what capacity is needed and what other support would be required by the town so an application could be prepared in the spring of 2021. The board stated they were generally in support of the grant application, but the timing of this round combined with other grant administration and staffing needs caused concern. The town does not want to rush the application process. Support for financial bookkeeping related to the grant is usually offered from RPC but was not available at this time. It may be available in the future or via an external consultant. The Selectboard encouraged continuing the conversations with the Planning Commission about zoning compliance issues and other planning related goals for the town. Elise will request time on a future agenda to discuss planning for the spring application round.

Road Foreman's Report – Tony Porter

- Tony presented the hydraulic study and proposal from Otter Creek Engineering for both Brown Hill East and Ben Roberts Road repairs. The proposals need review—the projects are slated for next summer.
- AOT sent hydraulic study for Lafayette Road. That is a big project with a 10' x 7' concrete box culvert recommended. Tony is waiting to receive the other 2 and then will evaluate the 3 studies and discuss with the board.
- USDA/NRCS grant work started today. Tony will meet with Jaron Borg (State stream alteration specialist) tomorrow and he hopes to receive permission to remove some sediment.

- Tony noted that there is a new USDA grant available for large projects, which can be considered once the H&H studies are received.
- Koran asked if funds will need to be expended for these projects first and then get reimbursed – Yes. Therefore planning and potential borrowing should be anticipated in the budgeting process.
- Tony requested an extension for the Stokes Hill Road repairs.
- Budgeting and road equipment planning: Robert Turner asked to meet with Tony to discuss equipment planning before the next meeting. Eric will also participate, and they will bring information to the board conversation on 9/15.

Speeding on Big Hollow Road

Residents Penny Weightman and Robin Fleming attended to speak with the selectboard about speeding issues. Drivers have increased speeds up to 50-60 MPH. The houses are close to the road in this section, cars have run into yards, etc. The sheriff's office has been contacted and increased patrolling will occur. Tony Porter will also add another speed limit sign at the top of the hill and by the pond to remind drivers of the 30 MPH limit. The town pays the sheriff for 10 hours of traffic control per month, which is all over town. The installation of a speed sign with sensor was discussed—Bristol has recently installed one. The town will continue to monitor the situation and seek support from the sheriff.

Job Description review

The board continued its discussion of current job descriptions. Many of the JDs on file are dated from 2009 and do not accurately reflect the responsibilities or tasks covered in various roles. Board members were to talk with staff and elected officials to seek input on the job descriptions before they are rewritten.

- Road crew – JD is recent and does not need update currently.
- Road foreman – JD is recent and does not need update currently.
- Delinquent Tax Collector – John will talk with Amy McCormick.
- Health officer – John will talk with Peter Ryersbach
- Town Clerk – Koran spoke with Cheryl. The JD outlines what is required by State statute for all town clerks. Cheryl noted that she customarily does far more than what is listed (as is true in many towns). The board said it would be helpful to have a list of the tasks and work that falls outside the statutory requirements but needs to be done in the office and is often not listed in JDs. This helps inform the work needed of the Assistant TC as well.
- Treasurer – Greg shared a revised draft based on what is required by State statute for all town treasurers. The statutory reference needs to be added. Koran and Celine have also discussed tasks and work that is beyond the statutory requirements. They are developing a list to help inform work needed from the Assistant Treasurer and others.

The board discussed the “institutional knowledge” that is carried by the current Town Clerk and Treasurer. With both Cheryl and Celine preparing for retirement, the board is looking for what tasks aren't listed anywhere. Many responsibilities have been picked up over the years and will need to be assigned to someone, whether staff member, appointed, or elected official. The board asked for procedures and process notes to be saved and shared to ensure the institutional knowledge is passed on.

Policy Review – Purchasing policy

The board continued its review of the draft purchasing policy provided by the VT League of Cities and Towns. They read through each section, most requiring no changes other than the amount thresholds determined for expenses and the levels of permission required for high cost purchases. Incidental purchases are up to \$2499. Major purchases will start at \$7501.

Discussion included competitive proposals, seeking bids from women & minority owned businesses, recurring purchases for items such as fuel equipment, road salt (State bid), etc.

Rebecca will enter all the final edits and send to the group for review and final approval at the next meeting.

Minutes of 8/4/20

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the minutes of 8/4/20 as presented. Greg Hahr second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: John Painter moved to approve the minutes of 8/18/20 with corrections. Greg Hahr second.

Motion carried – JP, GH, EC approved; NB abstained (was not present 8/18).

Motion: Eric Cota moved to approve the minutes of 8/25/20 with corrections. John Painter second.

Motion carried – EC, JP, NB approved; GH abstained (was not present 8/25)

Motion to adjourn:

Motion carried.

Bills/Orders

Motion: Greg Hahr moved to approve the warrants for bills and orders as presented. John Painter second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Nancy Boss moved to approve the past due invoice # for VC3. Eric Cota second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Building & maintenance

Pottery Studio Lease – The current tenant will be notified via formal letter regarding next steps.

Post Office lease – Koran has done research on the proposed lease from the USPS. Attorney Jim Runcie reviewed the draft Koran sent and he returned comments on a variety of topics for the board's consideration including: renewal lease term length and terms for ending contract; remove clause regarding sublets; snow removal responsibilities to be removed.

EVSE Electric Vehicle Charging station final grant reimbursement

Rebecca received via email an MOU and authorization from VT AOT for the final 10% matching grant for the costs of installing the EV charging station. Though the work has long been completed, the MOU needs to be signed and returned.

Motion: John Painter moved to approve the MOU and authorize Eric Cota to sign on behalf of the selectboard. Nancy Boss second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Motion: John Painter made a motion to enter Executive Session per 1 VSA §313(a)(1) regarding contracts and/or labor relations agreements with employees. Eric Cota second. Rebecca Elder was invited into the Executive Session.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Greg Hahr made a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:58 p.m. John Painter second.

Motion carried unanimously.

No action was taken as a result of the Exec. Session.

Motion to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.: Nancy Boss moved, John Painter second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant