

Starksboro Selectboard meeting

September 12, 2023

Unapproved

Present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Carin McCarthy, John Painter

Others: Rebecca Elder, Josh Martell, Amy McCormick, Nancy Boss, Luke McCarthy, Susan Klaiber

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Review of agenda: no changes

Road Foreman's Report

- **Ireland Rd** – Road was closed for a few days during major maintenance work on the upper portion and at intersection with Conway. Residents could pass through, and delivery services have resumed.
- **Dan Sargent Rd** – Two residents contacted the town with concerns about safety on the sharp corner of Dan Sargent near Route 17. New guardrails are planned; however the wet bank conditions are unstable and prevent work right now. Road debris has accumulated beneath the existing guardrails. Ditching was done recently. Guardrails have been backordered, have increased in price, and need to be installed by an outside contractor (Lafayettes). The guardrails installed on Jerusalem Road used the funds budgeted for the year. Road foreman will monitor the situation.
- **Robert Young Rd** – Road flooded during another recent hard rain; conditions and status of culvert continue to be monitored. Debris has been cleared again.
- **Cota rec field parking lot maintenance** – Grading and repair of potholes will occur in >2 weeks.
- **Quaker St** – Paving was supposed to have been done 100' up the hill from Rte. 17 to prevent debris from running onto the paved road.

Current Business

Town Treasurer

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to appoint Nancy Boss as the Starksboro Town Treasurer. Carin McCarthy seconded. **Vote:** Approved unanimously

Local Hazards Mitigation Plan (BRIC grant)

Two proposals were received for consulting services to assist the Town in updating the LHMP and submit for approval by FEMA. The proposals were from OPH Consulting and SEAM Solutions. Our current plan was written in 2018 by a group of residents and town officials with the assistance of Addison Co. Regional Planning. The town was awarded funds through the BRIC program (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) to help support the process with a 25% town match required. Board members reviewed the complete proposals.

Motion: John Painter made a motion to accept the proposal from SEAM Solutions not to exceed \$8,200. Carin McCarthy seconded. **Vote:** Approved unanimously

Rebecca will notify SEAM and coordinate work to begin the review and editing process.

Town property:

- a. Update on wastewater system replacement proposals for library – proposal received from Dennis Casey. Work can be scheduled to be completed by the 10/31/23 due date. Jerusalem

- Schoolhouse – anticipated cost of the replacement wastewater system is less than expected and will fall below the threshold for a sealed bid process. Rebecca will post the RFP information and distribute it to local contractors for bids.
- b. Post Office window replacement – Scheduled for week of 9/18 if the weather allows. Rebecca will coordinate with Postmaster for timing.
 - c. Town clerk's office – rear porch refinishing was completed.
 - d. Building painting – Plan is needed for 2024 so a contractor can be scheduled. John will assess the buildings for prioritization.

Town Administration Update

- a. Office and town clerk updates
 - i. FEMA update – Brown Hill East bridge project will require a cost adjustment request; Rebecca is working with Otter Creek Engineering and the State on the request for FEMA.
- b. Zoning/PC/DRB update – Permit applications have slowed. ZA is focused on some compliance issues, and research to support the PC with updates to the Bylaws.
- c. MERP grant energy assessments and update on discussion with Energy Committee re: solar production, solar credits & future production options – Rebecca and Nancy attended the EC meeting on 9/11 to discuss several of these topics. MERP assessment application was submitted for 5 buildings (Jerusalem Schoolhouse, Food Shelf, Library, Town Clerk's office, and Fire station). Solar credit allocation needs to be reviewed and updated.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the warrants for A/P and payroll as presented. Carin McCarthy seconded. **Vote:** Approved unanimously

Motion: John Painter moved to approve the minutes of 8/15/23 and 8/28/23 with edits as noted. Eric Cota seconded. **Vote:** Approved unanimously

Selectboard roundtable

Harvest Fest 10/21. There will be wildlife viewing with VINS 2-3 pm. Community games and gatherings for all ages at the Town Pavilion from 3-5 pm. Rain location is Robinson School. Ladies Auxiliary and volunteers will have a planning meeting on 9/14.

ARPA Discussion

Luke McCarthy and Susan Klaiber were present to answer questions about the Jerusalem Schoolhouse and Fire Station #2 projects. The committee has done the preparatory work, the DRB approval is secured, and the group sees the project as ready to move to construction phase.

A fundamental challenge is how to start the project without the funds secured for competition? The committee members are willing to work on grant applications and local fundraising but further investment from the Town will be required. They presented 3 options for consideration of staging the project – what work can be done in phases. The wastewater system replacement is essential to support the schoolhouse being usable and the permit will expire or need an extension by 12/31/23. The Selectboard will consider 3 proposals for phases of work ranging from \$51,600 to \$191,000 to advance portions of the project.

The board then returned to considering allocations of funds and decided:

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to disburse a total of \$138,634 of ARPA funds for the following projects:

- \$61,868 for Fire Dept. equipment
- \$37,500 for the Town Administrator position over 2 years
- \$24,866 digitization of the land records
- \$6,800 architect fees for Jerusalem Schoolhouse and Fire Station #2

\$6,100 lead remediation for Jerusalem Schoolhouse
\$1,500 site plan for Jerusalem Fire Station #2 DRB application

Carin McCarthy seconded the motion. **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion that premature general public knowledge about a pending zoning violation would clearly place the state, municipality, other public body, or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage.

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion to enter executive session per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1) confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body. Nancy Boss and Rebecca Elder were invited into the session. Eric Cota seconded both motions.

Vote: Approved unanimously.

Motion to exit Executive Session: John Painter, Eric Cota second. Approved unanimously.

Motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm: John Painter, Eric Cota second. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder
Town Administrator

Meetings will return to a 6 p.m. start on 9/26 and future meetings unless otherwise noted.