

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 11/13/18
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Keegan Tierney, Peter Marsh, Tony Porter

Others present: Tom Estey, Rebecca Elder, Jeff Keeney, Robert Turner, Richard Faesy, Jeff Dunham, Pete Antos-Ketcham

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

Changes/additions to the agenda:

- VLCT presentation was postponed.
- Rearrange agenda to discuss current business items at 6pm time slot until guests arrive for next topics.
- Add an executive session to discuss a personnel issue.

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to drop the insurance quote process and to continue coverage with VLCT. Tony Porter 2nd

Discussion: The board talked about whether money is the only consideration when evaluating the bid proposals. There are many benefits to continuing PACIF coverage with VLCT.

Amendment to the motion: Peter Marsh made an amendment to the motion to drop either insurance agency from consideration if a quote is not received in mail or email by end of day Wednesday, 11/21/18. Keegan Tierney 2nd.

Motion carried.

Road Foreman's Report

- The State approved a \$10K grant (Town matches 20%) to make road improvements from end of Conway Rd.; stone lining the ditch is part of the work. This was a critical item on the road inventory.
- Problems with the furnace at the garage: electrical issue was fixed.
- First snow of the season came 11/13.
- Kristen Toy wrote with a request regarding the drainage issue at the base of the shared driveway entrance to the Toy and Dickstein residences on Shaker Hill Road. Due to run off from both driveways/properties, water buildup forms and creates ice in the winter, problems for the school bus, etc. In the past, Tom has shoveled out the ditch that connects the two driveways to keep the water flowing. There is a stone wall along driveways and crosses over to a very small culvert. Tom says it has been there for 20+ years. He suggests adding a curtain drain starting in the neighboring driveway. The issue does not originate in the town right of way so the two landowners need to assess the work needed and fix the issue in the spring. Tom will clear the ditch again this year to try to prevent ice buildup. Rebecca will notify the landowner and copy Tom on the response.

Personnel Policy review continued

(The board is reviewing the language in the VLCT personnel policy template.)

- Sec. 22 Bereavement Leave – keep all language
- Sec. 23: Parental and Family Leave – The board wants clarification on the rules and obligations for employers with less than 50 employees. > Get input from VLCT/Jill Muhr
- Sec. 24 – Short Term family leave – keep all language
- Sec. 25 – Crime Victim Leave - keep all language
- Sec. 26 – Leave of absence without Pay – keep all language

- Sec. 27 – Military leave – keep all language
- Sec. 28 – Jury Leave – Modify the language in the VLCT policy with the current Town policy
- Sec. 29 – Overtime and Comp Time Off - Discussion of dept. head as a salary employee with hourly employee direct reports. Discussion is needed at length in preparation for the next hiring for the road crew. Peter noted that for supervision, a manager/dept. head may not be able to perform those duties as an hourly employee. Seek advice from the league.
- Sec. 30 – Employment harassment and discrimination – For contact, insert SB Chair OR Vice Chair
- Sec. 31 – Sexual Harassment - keep all language
- Sec 32 – Employee Discipline - keep all language
- Sec. 33 - Employee Termination Process - Keegan wants to discuss the use of a probationary period and the “at will” status in Vermont. Seek legal consultation from Jim Carroll and VLCT.
- Sec. 34 – Severability – In the case of elected officials such as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer, the assistants they hire will be affected by the policy as well.

Next steps: Koran and Rebecca will review the notes from the personnel policy conversations and come back to the group with some answers and suggestions for language to insert in the sections in question. Koran/Rebecca will contact VLCT and/or the town attorney on various items for clarification.

Energy Committee EV station grant request

Jeff Dunham, Richard Faesy, and Pete Antos-Ketcham attended on behalf of the Energy Committee to request the Selectboard’s approval to apply for a grant to cover 90% of the costs for installation of an Electric Vehicle charging station near the Town Clerk’s office.

Jeff explained that the qualifying sites for this grant are in Park and Rides. Preference is given to “designated town centers”. The grant available is to cover up to 90% of materials and installation. There are some additional costs such as extended warranties, the contract with the provider (for credit card processing services for users). The provider takes care of the billing. The Selectboard sets the rate for charging. Some towns have opted not to pay the software costs and instead offer free power as an incentive. Richard received a quote from an electrician - \$20,513. Jeff would like to propose placement in the park and ride: he brought a map showing the site in the middle of the east side of the commuter lot. The charger would serve 2 cars – 30AMP stations – good for 24-25 miles on 2-3 hours of a charge. The exact location doesn’t need to be settled on now. Overall, the funders will be looking at whether this push will help with EV station coverage on a regional level.

Peter asked who will benefit from the EV station. How many electric vehicles are owned by residents of Starksboro? The Town would put out a \$2,000 minimum for this project. Jeff said those who will benefit include employees who may own electric vehicles, library patrons, out-of-town commuters, etc. Jeff said charging stations are service to the community as a whole (reducing carbon footprint, encouraging better energy choices) Pete Antos-Ketcham said this is the community space with the community garden and library. Peter is looking at the cost benefit for tax payers. Richard said “build it and they will come”: he believes there will be more electric vehicles on the road in the next 5 years. Having a station in town might encourage people to drive through here and might help influence people’s choice to buy an electric vehicle instead of a gas power one.

- Koran asked if the electrical service to the town clerk’s building has the appropriate amount of energy. Jeff said it is probably a 200 amp service. This should be confirmed.
- Keegan asked about setting rates. Who earns the money from the station? Town gets money after credit card fees. So the board can look at energy costs and then determine a rate that may produce a small profit. Based purely on economics, the Town will make very little from having a station.

- The board discussed possibly adding extra conduit for other needs like power for the community garden, water access, etc.
- Jeff Keeney attended representing the Planning Commission. He summarized the recent PC conversation about zoning related to EV stations. The PC talked about human behavior issues (observing time limits for charging; not leaving car parked all day); placement issues (PC doesn't prefer the commuter area and discussed other potential sites including the town garage, the old town office/post office lot, Cota field lot); cost/benefit for Starksboro.
 - The charging time issue is a real concern: there is potential for people sitting in the town office while waiting for a charge, requesting use of WIFI, using facilities. There doesn't seem to be any current demand for an EV station and it likely won't get much use in the early years. The grant money is only here now and may not be available again.
- Koran said the board needs to be aware of obligations for the future. Will the prices be similar once the pre-paid plan ends?
- Tony asked if there is any requirement for operating for a certain number of years. Can the station be discontinued if the Town wanted to eliminate it? Jeff did not know and will inquire.
- Peter asked about plowing and how the placement can be least invasive for those who plow the lots. Tony said it would be a lot easier to have the EV spot located on an end.
- Eric said the town owns the land behind the commuter lot; perhaps they could add two spots there for this purpose. That would eliminate the concern about taking up spaces that are needed and would reduce the interference with plowing issues.

Motion: Peter Marsh made a motion to approve the application for the EV charging station grant with the understanding there is a 10% town commitment and the board makes no commitment to accepting the grant (a separate motion at a future meeting is required if the application is accepted). Keegan Tierney 2nd. **Motion carried.**

Jeff D. also gave an update on battery power research for the town clerk's office. He is still study the power loads from the building. The battery program is in a state of change: GMP sent out their first batch of pilot devices. They are now working on the second pilot which might offer a large battery. Jeff suggested being added to the waiting list for interested parties so the Town can receive details when the information is available. Jeff will send the information to Rebecca.

Town report – Robert Turner

Theme: Elsa Gilbertson has helped develop the themes in the past. She proposed the town churches for 2019. Report development: The auditors make sure the report includes the financials and appropriate information for the voters at Town Meeting Day including projections on various funds and purchases required (road equipment in particular). The rest of the publication comes together from various submissions, from the Town Clerk, and the school district. Rebecca will help Robert with the assembly of the pieces in January/February and help prepare for printing.

There are a number of town positions open and vacancies to be filled. Perhaps there can be an open forum for candidates prior to Town Meeting. Robert would be willing to help organize.

Other updates:

- Sugaring lease on town forest – This needs to be revised and renewed. The leasee has been paying market rate; there was an escalator in the lease but it is now over. Income is roughly \$2K per year.
- Robert has been in communication with the Vermont Land Trust regarding the vegetation on the berm by the Town Garage. The plantings will be done in 2019. Robert will try to get some inexpensive trees to intersperse with the longer growing trees. Budget amount needed.

- Bridge over the ballfield – It will need re-decking this year. Robert is researching cedar. Current bridge is made of hemlock and survived Tropical Storm Irene. The Conservation Commission would try to cover this expense.

Option to Lease extension request from Green Lantern

Motion: Tony Porter made a motion to extend the option to lease contract with Green Lantern Development with an expiration of 5/31/19. Peter Marsh 2nd.

Vote: Motion carried.

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to authorize Koran Cousino to sign the Option as described above. Tony Porter 2nd.

Vote: Motion carried.

Executive Session – Green Lantern

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to enter into executive session to review comments from town attorney per 1 VSA S.313. Tony Porter 2nd (8:25)

Vote: Motion carried.

Motion to exit executive session: Keegan Tierney made a motion, Eric Cota 2nd. (8:38)

Vote: Motion carried.

No action was taken.

Executive Session - Personnel

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. per 1 VSA S.313 (3) to discuss a personnel issue. Tony Porter 2nd.

Vote: Motion carried.

Motion to exit Executive Session: Tony Porter made a motion, Peter Marsh 2nd.

Vote: Motion carried.

No action was taken.

State's Prison Hollow speed

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to reduce the speed on State's Prison Hollow Rd from 45 to 35 mph and amend the Town's speed ordinance to read "a maximum speed of 35mph for town road #3."

Vote: Motion carries. Keegan Tierney abstained.

- Rebecca to inform the local sheriff's office.
- Make change to the ordinance and record in the land records.

Mail review & misc. business

Palmer site visit – Keegan will attend along with Amy McCormick and a representative from the BCA.

Jerusalem Community Center Committee request to apply for Preservation Trust of VT grant. The board approves.

Lister's office – Mitch Horner is still working on prices for the contractor services.

Minutes of 10/30/18

Motion: Peter Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/30/18. Eric Cota 2nd.

Motion carried.

[Bills/Orders](#)

Motion to approve the orders as presented by the Treasurer: Keegan Tierney made the motion, Tony Porter 2nd.

Vote: Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn: Keegan Tierney moved and Peter Marsh 2nd. (9:15)

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant

DRAFT