

Selectboard meeting
November 19, 2019
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Keegan Tierney, Greg Hahr, Nancy Boss

Unable to attend: Eric Cota

Visitors present: Rebecca Elder, Meredith McFarland, Peter Ryersbach, Robert Turner (by phone)

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

Additions/changes to the agenda:

- Credit card application update - admin
- FEMA update under SB concerns
- Snow removal under building & maintenance
- Reimbursement request with bills

Bristol Recreation Presentation – Meredith McFarland

Meredith McFarland is the Bristol Rec director. She attended Robinson and played sports through SSP. She worked at Sugarbush for years, and she jumped at the opportunity with the Bristol Rec Program and has been there since May 2018. She is making changes to programming and wants input from other towns. They continue learning what events work, which programs are well attended, and how to have more effective engagement with surrounding communities. Meredith brought mountain biking to the Bristol Rec program. She received a grant and would like to go to each town and do short clinics. She's developing a "bike library" to loan out bikes to kids who do not have their own. Pottery classes continue to be popular. Adult Tai-chi and programs on adult wellness and prevention are gaining popularity as the word gets out. First Aid/CPR classes are run through Bristol Rescue. The HUB also has new staff members, including a female staffer, which has helped bring more girls into the program in the afternoon. The hockey rink will be a shared community effort and open for events this winter. One of the biggest challenges for getting increased participation from town like Starksboro is transportation.

Animal Control Ordinance

K. Cousino spoke with a State trooper to seek some additional advice about ongoing challenging dog issues. The AC Sheriff is the backup for civil issues and will go with a town official to pick up dogs. State police are not a resource on this issue.

The board reviewed the draft as discussed as the last meeting, decided to remove the sections pertaining to "potentially vicious dog owners," and otherwise approved the policy as presented. The draft was revised during the meeting and all board members reviewed and approved.

The Selectboard approved the Animal Control Ordinance and signed the original. Rebecca will proceed with the legal posting.

- Town residents have the right to petition the adoption.
- If no petition is presented, the ordinance becomes effective 60 days from the date of approval.

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to approve the Animal Control Ordinance as revised on 11/19/19. Nancy Boss 2nd.

Motion carried.

Bylaw – Proposed amendments from the Planning Commission

The Selectboard received the draft Starksboro Bylaws with amendments as recommended and approved by the Planning Commission. The PC held a public hearing to receive feedback from the community. The

board made one editorial change to ensure consistency between the "Use Table" in Sec. 210 and the proposed definition of forest products processing. No other changes were made.

The Selectboard reviewed the summary statement from the PC along with the redlined version of the proposed amendments. The board accepted the proposed bylaws and will proceed with their own public hearing, which will be the final opportunity for public input prior to adoption.

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to accept the proposed amendments to the Starksboro Land Use and Development Regulations ("Unified Bylaws") as presented by the Planning Commission dated 11/7/19. Greg Hahr 2nd

Motion carried.

- The Selectboard will hold its public hearing on the bylaws on **December 17 at 7:30 pm** following the regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Clerk's office.

Administrative Updates

- Rebecca spoke with Community Bank and the credit card processing department. Some of the new credit cards arrived though there was some confusion about number of cards ordered. The board will clarify with staff members and unneeded cards will be cancelled.
- Rebecca informed the board about a zoning situation that may require a formal notice of violation in South Starksboro. She will keep the board updated on conversations with the landowner and next steps required.
- Zoning office hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning the first week of December.

Selectboard Concerns

- FEMA representative to do a ride-along with the Road Foreman on Thursday, 11/21. The NRCS team may need a tour too. T. Porter will keep the board informed about the meetings and next steps, when admin help is needed, etc.

Building & Maintenance

- Snow removal services to be provided by Pete Antos-Ketcham. Rebecca will draft a letter of agreement regarding the town's expectations, remuneration, and other details.

Budget Discussion

Budget planning. The board met with Auditors Peter Ryersbach and Robert Turner (by phone) to discuss the plan for the budget this year. The board also solicited some information from Jen Meyers about how the Town of Bristol has been using NEMREC and warning their budget. She offered to make some suggestions, which were reviewed at the meeting. Next steps:

- The board aims to create a streamlined system moving forward with category simplification. The road foreman and treasurer will be consulted, and then the auditors for formatting in the town report.
- Koran will check in with Celine and Cheryl about town office budget lines.
- Keegan will meet with Tony about town highway budget lines.
- The board will continue to solicit numbers for payroll and bookkeeping services to begin January 1 for payroll and later in the spring for other bookkeeping. The auditors anticipate 1-2 days a week for a professional bookkeeper.
- The board wants to be more effective with their time. A cost center budget will help with focusing the board's work on strategic planning and efficient regular review of finances.
- The group discussed whether to break out the highway budget: VLCT advises this. There should be no comingling of the funds.
- The board's goal is to simplify the budgeting and reporting process so it is easy to understand for the average taxpayer. They seek to provide the appropriate level of details for a variety of municipal budgeting and reporting purposes.

Town groups and reimbursements: The board does not want to make it difficult for volunteers who make purchases for the food shelf and sports program. At the same time, board members expressed the need to have clearer bookkeeping and an understanding of the challenges. They are also discussing the town entity parameters that allow the programs to operate efficiently and transparently.

- Accounting needs to be as tight as possible; want the volunteers to have flexibility within reason.
- Another area for consideration: recycling/trash income.

The board will determine its level of comfort with these scenarios and the reporting needed for transparency and consistency.

AT&T bill issue: K. Cousino said we are paying ahead, and the board is unclear on what is owed. There is a credit on the account, yet a check is still being mailed. P. Ryersbach will follow up with the Treasurer to pay online via town credit card on a recurring basis.

Town Report theme: Robert Turner asked the board for any requests or input on the theme. He will rely on the historical society who has done the historical commentary each year. (Thank you Elsa and historical society contributors!)

Review of Minutes

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/15/19 with date corrected. Keegan Tierney 2nd.

Motion carried. (Greg recused)

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/5/19. Greg Hahr 2nd.

Motion carried.

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/12/19 with changes as noted. Keegan Tierney 2nd.

Motion carried.

Bills/Orders

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve reimbursement to Rebecca Elder for payment of \$253.26 for VC3 bill. Greg Hahr 2nd.

Motion carried.

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to approve the warrants for bills and orders as presented by the Treasurer. Greg Hahr 2nd

Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn: Keegan Tierney made a motion to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Nancy Boss 2nd.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.