

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 12/3/19
Unapproved

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

Unable to attend: Keegan Tierney

Others present: Sheila Knight, Luke McCarthy, Susan Klaiber, Tom Estey, Tony Porter, Megan Nedzinski

Eric Cota called to order at 5:30 p.m. Koran Cousino will arrive at 6:15 p.m. In the absence of the Chair or the Vice Chair, Eric Cota ran the first portion of the meeting.

Road Foreman's Report

- Winter plowing is underway. T. Porter said they have used a lot of sand already. Two bigger trucks put out 16 loads in one day. Ice storms – typical winter maintenance; back up to a full fleet with a spare truck now.
- New crew member, Eric Huestis, has been on staff for over 3 months and getting to know his route. Another alternate is being added to the driver pool for emergencies. T. Porter hopes to have 2-3 alternates available through the winter.
- FEMA – no response yet; T. Porter did a ride along with Emergency Mgmt and FEMA rep. 2 weeks ago. Today he rode with a USDA rep. evaluating areas that may qualify for situations that haven't washed out yet but could (Stokes Hill Rd example; Gully Hill – may get a stream alteration permit); looked at Hillsboro and Ireland Rd. will pay to remove debris from the stream. Discussing a voluntary buyout for the State's Prison Hollow Ext. – houses have been there for 50+ years.
- Road budget – T.Porter has met with K. Tierney to review budget from last year and current expenditures to date; a few notes: amount is low for culverts; budget line items need to be broken down a little further; equipment rental drivers are being charged under equipment for example.
- Stream alteration and Lewis Creek area Hillsboro/lower Ireland Road – T. Porter suggested the board might consider a letter to the Lewis Creek Association about the worsening conditions. Last Thursday, the rain caused the river to breach again, a little further south this time. Personal property and human life is being affected significantly and more often in these storms. Bridges may be needed soon if the water continues to breach Route 116.

[The board continued with regular business agenda items while waiting for visitors to arrive for the scheduled 6:15 discussion of the Jerusalem Community Center project. Some items were delayed until K.Cousino's arrival so she could project updates.]

Building & maintenance

- Lister floor repair is scheduled for May. Contractor unavailable through the winter.

Budget planning

Budget planning will continue with information gathered by Koran Cousino in conversation with town clerk office staff and Keegan Tierney regarding the roads budget. A special budget meeting will be held next Tuesday, Dec. 10 at 6:15 p.m. to review spreadsheets and focus on additional information needed.

Administrative and Zoning Updates

- Payroll service update: Rebecca is collecting quotes from a few providers and bookkeeping services.
- Zoning: Mobile home on Robert Young Road to be issued a temporary permit for up to 6 months.

Mail review:

Addison Co. budget meeting – 12/9

Green Up Day Coordinator position needs to be filled – any one interested should contact the selectboard

Bills/Orders

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the orders as presented by the Treasurer. Greg Hahr 2nd.
Motion carried.

[Koran Cousino arrived 6:15pm]

Jerusalem Community Center Report

Susan Klaiber, Megan Nedzinski, Luke McCarthy, and Tom Estey were present to represent the committee and answer questions. The committee provided the Selectboard with a summary report of work to date, a breakdown of how funds have been used, and what they propose for consideration:

- Recommend that the old station be demolished;
- Construct a 2-bay fire station on site as a detached structure;
- Add an addition to back of schoolhouse, slightly larger than the old addition to be demolished; modern kitchen and bathrooms to be added and would allow for year-round use and ADA compliance.
- Waiver would be needed for the border by the store; or, if not granted, plan can be altered.
- The report included estimated costs, a list of potential funding sources, and other budgetary information.

The group had a wide-ranging discussion including questions from K. Tierney (submitted via email):

- Setbacks and positioning of the proposed fire station – space limitations for turnaround; plan allows for a front apron to be out of the path of travel. They could save two corners on the building but looked at overall cost and thought it was warranted given other conditions.
- Scale of addition – size dictated mostly by ADA bathrooms and ramp; accessibility is the driver.
- S. Klaiber will send 3D images of the scale and scope of the project in the landscape.
- Construction of a firehouse only would cost ~\$380K *without* acquiring land elsewhere in S. Starksboro. What would it cost to construct the fire house there and not do anything to the schoolhouse? Committee will estimate that option.
- Electrical in the current schoolhouse would need to be brought up to code regardless of other plans. The water and well are fine. Septic system would need to be upgraded regardless.
- The committee is in full support of the proposal. There is no dissent on committee.
- Potential grant revenue: the JCCC has \$40K that could be used as matching funds for other opportunities. The committee believes a PTV grant is good chance; other sources are being explored. The group has discussed ways to cut back/stage the plan if fundraising doesn't move along quickly. For example, the structural changes could be done first and they could wait to fit up bathrooms/other areas as additional funds were raised.

The group discussed various ideas about how to cut the budget down. They would like to engage a fundraising consultant to see if there is potential for raising more than the projected \$100K.

Tom Estey stated that the Fire Department needs to do something soon. The existing building has served its purpose. The weather is taking a toll on the truck that is kept there; it often sits in standing water, silt washes through when there's heavy rain/flooding.

This is the recommendation to go before the voters and to be discussed at town meeting. The committee plans to hold a public meeting in February to help educate taxpayers and provide information about the survey and the information sessions. Sketches and drawings will be available.

The Selectboard will consider the proposal and offer suggestions to the committee. Some initial research was done on seeking a bond vs. a loan for the project. Treasurer Celine Coon has been consulted regarding how past projects such as the town garage were handled. No performance bond was required on the town garage project. An estimated tax burden will be important information for voters.

The JCCC next meets on January 13, 2020. The selectboard will consider and share recommendations prior to that date.

Animal control update:

K. Cousino has spoken with Attorney Jim Carroll and the Addison County Sheriff Peter Newton about the next steps regarding the dog complaints on Shamrock Drive. There must be a warrant to seize the dogs. The town is providing both the attorney and sheriff with history of situation and list of complaints. The selectboard feels that action must be taken and agreed to proceed with recommendations from the attorney.

Minutes of 11/19

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

Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.: Nancy Boss moved, Greg Hahr 2nd

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder, SB Assistant

Special Meeting scheduled for 12/10/19 at 6:15 pm

Regular meeting: 12/17/19 at 5:30 p.m.

Public hearing on Bylaws: 12/17/19 at 7:30 p.m.