

Starksboro Selectboard Minutes

Special Meeting

January 24, 2020

Unapproved

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

Unable to attend: Keegan Tierney

Others present: Rebecca Elder, Robert Turner

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

The purpose of this special meeting is to review the final budget and approve the budget and warning for town meeting.

Budget Discussion and final review

Robert Turner (auditor) attended and brought background information he found since the last meeting and was able to answer some of the questions that remained. The board discussed the current tax revenue line, which should only include the municipal portion of roughly \$350,000.

- SS & Medicare – 12% and 1/2 is pass through funds. This among is likely lower and Robert will confirm with Celine Coon.
- There is a \$18,102 surplus after making adjustments. There should be a savings in payroll for highway as well.
- IT/tech – Reduce to one computer upgrade and reduce by 2500
- Guard rails –reduce by 50% and do half the project
- Town hall – Kitchen floor repairs included

The Board performed a line by line review and trimmed the budget by nearly 4%.

There was discussion about health insurance benefits and the significance of this large expense item. The board will explore options to consider for the next fiscal year. For example, the Town of Bristol phased in changes for employee contribution with 5% change per year over 3 years.

There are many items in the budget that are determined by conditions that are beyond the control of the board or town. Expenses are down but income is also down. With long time employees retiring, the board is anticipating full time replacements and benefit packages for those people. The budget reflects the elimination of anything that could readily be cut.

Jerusalem Community Center Request

The JCC submitted a request to the Selectboard for approval to spend up to \$15,000 for revised architectural designs to address the cost and zoning issues raised by the Selectboard and the Planning Commission.

Given the budget considerations for the proposed fiscal year, the Selectboard decided not to take action.

Action Items:

Motion to approve the budget as presented: Nancy Boss moved and Greg Hahr seconded
Motion carried. Eric Cota voted no, Koran Cousino, Nancy Boss, and Greg Hahr approved.

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the town meeting warning as edited and reflecting the budget as approved. Greg Hahr seconded.

Motion carried.

The final budget request to the voters is \$744,743 including a surplus.

The tax impact will be roughly \$188 on 200,000 home – to be confirmed by the Treasurer and Auditors.

The board expressed appreciation to Robert Turner for his extensive work on the budget and the many hours he has spent researching information and attending meetings.

Motion to adjourn at 8:06 p.m.: Greg Hahr moved and Nancy Boss seconded.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder, SB Assistant

Next regular meeting: February 4, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Office