

Starksboro Selectboard
Minutes of 2/18/20
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, Keegan Tierney, Greg Hahr, Nancy Boss
Others present: Tony Porter, Rebecca Elder, Ethan DeBaise, Scott DeBaise, Richard Faesy, Pete Antos-Ketcham, Dennis Casey

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

Changes/additions to the agenda:

Visitor's Business

Dennis Casey spoke with the Selectboard about the conditions at Cota field. The Planning Commission has been discussing community projects and supporting community engagement, including the sports program. Due to the restrictions in the conservation easement on Cota field, improvements to the draining for the ballfields is not possible nor is expansion of the parking area. Therefore the PC has been thinking about the future needs of the town and possible uses for the 14 acres behind the Robinson school near the solar panels. He would like to explore this issue at no cost to the town. The Selectboard supports exploration of this idea and advised that all zoning issues be explored as early as possible.

The Selectboard also noted that the bridge on the Cota field property needs to be closed off. The Conservation Commission will be contacted.

Road Foreman's Report

- Tony Porter said the 6-month review of the new road crew employee was completed.
- Recycling area – The Selectboard received a complaint from a concerned resident about the traffic flow and road conditions at the recycling area. T. Porter said the area is plowed and sanded. Recycling days are always very busy. Jennifer Turner has enlisted help from Erin Bent and some others who are covering shifts. A better flow will be organized so that folks will make a loop: pull up, unload, and leave. Parking becomes a problem. Cones and signage will be used to help direct traffic.
- Tony will meet with Ashley from AOT re: structures grant. Otter Creek Engineering has been looking at the Ben Roberts site. Report will be available shortly.

Energy Committee – Firewood bank

Pete Antos-Ketcham and Richard Faesy attended to discuss exploring the possibility for processing the wood cut from the VEC clearing along Big Hollow Road and Shaker Hill Road. They want to know if the town would support this with any labor from the town road crew and/or use of the area by the old town shed.

The Energy Committee will need to talk with the landowners where the trees were cut. The EC would need to retrieve the wood and bring it to the wood bank and process it. The selectboard said the main issues to consider are liability issues and labor. The town doesn't have the capacity to provide labor.

Tony Porter said assembling a crew of volunteers would be problematic because flagging and signage would be needed if any work was to be done in the ROW. The most economical approach would be transporting the wood via a logging truck. Processing on the town land would involve the same liability considerations – work should be done by someone with insurance coverage.

Next steps to explore:

- The EC will explore funding or a grant to cover costs.

- Richard will call VLCT MAC re: liability questions – other towns must be facing similar issues.
- EC will get an idea for costs

Richard also asked about reporting to the Selectboard about other work the committee is doing. Koran said sending email summaries works well and to request time on the agenda as needed for larger questions and topics that will need funding or more coordination with other town resources and boards. The EC continues looking at the power use of the town and solar project proposals to help cover the remaining 20% of the electric costs with solar generated power. The committee will come back to the Selectboard soon with some recommendations.

Town Meeting prep

Koran Cousino spoke with Dan Dubenetsky about the warning and planning for town meeting. A formal farewell to Tom Estey will be included.

Koran will give the brief Selectboard update and thank those who are not returning to office or running again (Keegan and Peter Ryersbach).

The BCA will meet on 2/26 at 6:30 p.m.

To be reviewed: Election process, checklist, schedule for town meeting service shifts
Greg can do the 7-9 counting and Hannaford shift if needed.

Keegan noted that for next year the appropriation will need to be increased re: the funds that are going to zero out. The board and road foreman will need to consider options. Fire equipment replacement could be extended longer but the road equipment less so.

Building & Maintenance updates

- Post office roof - Cheryl was contacted by Todd at the PO regarding the poor condition of the roof. The board would like to put on a standing seam roof. Rebecca will call Josh at Murphy's for a quote.
- Food shelf – lock on the door needs to be replaced.
- Sign in front of the PO parking lot – still need to determine where power is coming from and how to disconnect it so the sign can be removed.

Admin updates

- Computer for listers is needed – laptop they are using has old Windows software that is no longer supported. Rebecca suggested replacing in the current fiscal year, if possible. The board approved – motion below.
- Office licenses – prices are increasing; 3 licenses are up for renewal in April.
- Tech support for garage computer – Rebecca consulted with Tony about the service contract and it was renewed (on the highway dept. budget)
- EV grant update – State requested copies of cancelled checks and additional documentation for reimbursement. Rebecca will follow up with Celine.
- Chamber of Commerce membership – Rebecca was contacted by Rob Carter regarding a membership for the Town with the Addison Co. Chamber. Rebecca will meet with him and bring info back to the board for consideration.

Motion: Keegan Tierney made a motion to approve the purchase of a new computer for the Listers in an amount not to exceed \$1500. Eric Cota second.

Motion carried.

Communication with the Town Clerk – Koran checked in with Cheryl who said communication between the clerk's office and the board is working well. Rebecca will schedule quarterly reminders for the Town clerk to attend a SB meeting for in-person updates.

Selectboard concerns:

None

Bills/Orders

Motion to approve the orders as presented by the Treasurer: Keegan Tierney moved and Nancy Boss second, with note on the payroll warrant re: extra check that was included.

Motion carried.

Review of mail:

- Signed the Census inquiry confirming town boundaries.

Review of Minutes 1/24/20

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 1/24/2020 as presented. Greg Hahr second.

Motion carried. K. Tierney abstained.

Review of Minutes 2/4/20

Motion: Nancy Boss made a motion to approve the minutes of 2/4/2020. Keegan Tierney second.

Motion carried. E.Cota and G.Hahr abstained.

Ethan DeBaise attended to observe a public meeting. He is seeking an Eagle Scout project and could work on the town entryway sign improvements. He will check in with the board as the snow melts and closer to spring. Rebecca will notify Robert Stokes, who owns the property where the northern sign is placed, that the scouts will be coming in the spring to look at the sign.

Motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.: Keegan Tierney moved and Nancy Boss second.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder
Selectboard Assistant