

Starksboro Selectboard Meeting

May 20, 2025

Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, Carin McCarthy, David Schmidt, Eric Cota, Tony Porter

Others present: Amanda Vincent – Town Administrator, Amy McCormick – Town Clerk, Josh Martell – Road Foreman, Steve Eustis

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. at the Starksboro Town Clerk's office.

Review agenda: Add Town Hall Lift Project & Remove Investment Policy

Public comment: Steve Eustis started by appreciating the road crew and also brought up concerns about how Rounds Rd is being maintained, even though it is a Class 4 Road. Steve noted that the culverts aren't covered well, there is a joint exposed in one area. Steve is willing to help in any way he can and noted he cleans out the ditches every fall.

Road Foreman Update: Josh Martell – Road Foreman mentioned we have about 800ft of culverts to replace this summer and lots of ditching to do everywhere. One current project is Brown Hill E Bridge. Other summer goals include grading, making sand and trying to catch up from last year. It was discussed that steel culverts should go in on Rounds Rd in place of the plastic culverts. Eric Cota mentioned replacing 800ft of culvert is a lofty goal, but Josh noted the 800ft is all failed culverts.

There will be a FEMA Mitigation Meeting on Thursday at 1:30pm.

The Selectboard discussed revamping our driveway permits to include a certificate of compliance or site inspection once the driveway has been installed.

Motion: Tony Porter motioned to approve the driveway permit on States Prison Hollow. Eric Cota second. Motion carried unanimously.

Class 4 Roads Policy – The Town of Bristol only maintains culverts and bridges unless it's an erosion issue. The Town of Bristol doesn't grade or do any gravel. Tony Porter mentioned that the Town of Starksboro takes very good care of their Class 4 Roads. Josh Martell wants to adjust the policy to remove the language about grading, keeping the roadway clear and ditches. The policy was used against the Selectboard after the flooding.

Better Back Roads grant is always an option.

Action: Tony Porter, Eric Cota and Josh Martell will work on policy language and present it at the next meeting.

Amanda Vincent noted that the highway fund has been in a deficit since at least FY20. Koran Cousino noted that in the past the General Fund surplus has been used to cover the highway deficit. Given the uncertainties with our financial reports over the past few years, it was challenging to make this happen.

Action: A Selectboard member will call to inquire about the \$20,000 bill for Paul's truck.

Action: Don't underbudget maintenance line item for the FY27 budget.

Action: Amanda Vincent to see where the Emergency Fund Balance stands.

Action: Plan for a rolling door for the salt shed in a capital maintenance plan.

Action: Amanda Vincent to get a cost estimate for hardwired security cameras for the garage and town office and an emergency button in the Town Office & Town Garage.

Current Business:

Jerusalem Community Center Project: The Town will create a new fund to manage this project. The ARPA funds that were earmarked for this project will be moved into the fund and any grants, bonds, other revenues and expenses will be booked to this fund. MERP funds won't look at being expended until we are farther along in the process. Community Potluck was a huge success!

Action: Publicize on website how to book schoolhouse & show calendar with availability.

Motion: Eric Cota motioned to appoint Amy McCormick as ZA and David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Ongoing Projects: The Library fund received grant money for the lift but the expense was booked to the general fund. Town office staff will work to clean this up and make sure the expense and revenue are hitting the same fund. Moving forward we will create a fund for the library project. All related revenues and expenses including earmarked ARPA funds will be moved to this new project fund.

Creekside Trail Suspension Bridge:

Motion: Tony Porter motioned for Koran Cousino to sign the grant. Carin McCarthy second. Eric Cota does not want to replace the bridge again if it gets washed out. Motion carried.

Selectboard Agenda, Packet & Minutes: The Selectboard would like the agenda to be posted on Front Porch Forum & Facebook moving forward. At this point, we will not post packets, but they are always available upon request.

Action: Amanda Vincent to investigate scheduling FPF posts ahead of time.

Animal Control Officer: Moved to executive session.

Personnel Policy: Amanda Vincent found the redline personnel policy from last year and shared it in the packet for review.

Capital Improvements/Maintenance: Discussion tabled to a future meeting.

Food Shelf Roof & Town Office Roof:

Action: Get a third quote for Eric Friend or Vermont Construction Company

Proposed Budget Timeline: The Selectboard will plan to think about budget before December this year.

Action: Amanda Vincent to connect with Addison County Sheriffs about ticketing limit in the village.

Motion: Eric Cota motioned to approve AP and Payroll. Tony Porter second. Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Carin McCarthy motioned to accept the minutes from 5/7 meeting. Eric Cota second. Motion approved unanimously.

Nancy Cornell sent updates on the education funding bill.

Motion: Tony Porter motioned to enter executive session. Eric Cota seconded.

No action taken.

Motion: Eric Cota moved to adjourn. Second by David Schmidt. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Vincent, Town Administrator