

Starksboro Selectboard meeting
May 21, 2024
Unapproved

Board members present: Koran Cousino, John Painter, David Schmidt, Eric Cota, Carin McCarthy
Others present: Josh Martell, Rebecca Elder, Amy McCormick, Tom Estey, Luke McCarthy

Koran Cousino called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. at the Starksboro Town Clerk's office.

Adjustments to the Agenda: Adjust time of Fire Station #2 conversation until Tom Estey arrives.

Visitor's Business

A resident of Ireland Road came to discuss the conditions. He stated he has lived on the road since 1987 and it has been a disaster this year. He described rain water flowing down the center of the road, that the road is not graded properly, and large piles of gravel are in his lawn. He had to pay a private contractor \$1500 to fix his driveway and the road in front of his access. He loses his berm each time road is graded.

Eric Cota responded stating that he drove Ireland Road before the meeting and the road is solid. Discussion included possible solutions to address the issues for this resident.

Motion: Carin McCarthy moved to enter executive session per 1 VSA §313(a)(3) to discuss personnel and contracts after having determined that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the municipality at a substantial disadvantage. Eric Cota seconded. Josh Martell was invited into the session.
Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Eric Cota moved to exit executive session at 6:30 pm. Carin McCarthy seconded.
Motion approved unanimously.
No action was taken.

Jerusalem Schoolhouse and Fire Station projects –

Luke McCarthy and Tom Estey joined to give updates on revised cost projections. The discussion covered a range of topics including some new cost estimates on various phases of the project. A local resident or community member will be needed to serve as a "clerk of the works" to be the point of contact and coordinate the project. The group asked about the need for insurance and bonding. We can use the town garage project as a model for systems.

John will contact George Parker to discuss the project and ask about possibility of parsing out segments of the job. Susan Jefferies could be a resource about process. Koran will contact Susan with a few questions including about the need for a bond. The group will come back with an update in July.

Community Events

The board reviewed the events that were held in Starksboro over the last year including the Harvest festival, the Chili cook off, Halloween trunk or treat, December holiday party, and Sugar on Snow. This spring there will be a town wide yard sale. The board agrees these events have been important for civic engagement, community building, better communication, and establishing a sense of place. The interest in events and attendance has improved over the last couple of years. Amy will send out a message to the FD Auxiliary to determine their interest in coordinating events. It may be ideal to form an ad-hoc events committee/group to work on the planning each year.

Town Administrator and Town Office updates

- **VEEP** event was held on 5/18 at the library. The event was sponsored by VEEP and the Energy Committee as a part of the MERP mini-grant that supports work in town to increase energy efficiency and awareness.

- **ACEDC-** Rebecca met with Fred Kenney and Karen Duguay from the AC Economic Dev Corp
- **Library updates** – Rebecca met with Cathy T. regarding library budget questions, various building maintenance details, and some requests. The library board requests a credit card be made available to the library director for purchasing. This will be decided with the library board when a joint meeting is scheduled for July.
 - Back pay issue was reviewed for Catherine Goldsmith
 - Town Hall projects – A conversation with the library board is needed. The accessibility project was reviewed recently. Rebecca, Katie, and Susan met by phone in early April and a grant app for MTAP funds was submitted in late April. Before the lift project proceeds, an MOU needs to be in place and an agreement about roles, responsibilities, and project management, aside from daily operations of the library programs.
 - Schedule board to board conversation for first meeting in July. Rebecca to follow up with Katie to confirm date.
- **Municipal parking lot** – Keegan Tierney asked about the plans for the parking area. Rebecca and Denny Casey looked at the parking loop and discussed options. Keegan will draw up the plan he suggests and then a discussion should be scheduled with Keegan, Denny, Eric, and Josh.
- **Village Center Designation** – The site visit was conducted on May 16. Attendees included Rebecca, Keegan Tierney, Denny Casey, Nancy Boss, Eric Cota, Adam Lougee (ACRPC), and two representatives from VDHP, Richard Amore and Natalie Elvidge. The group walked the village area along Route 116 from the Robinson school property to the Food Shelf building property and also the South Starksboro area that includes the Jerusalem Schoolhouse and the Jerusalem Country Store. A presentation was made by VDHP. The next step is for maps to be created of these proposed areas and an application will be submitted to the State for approval of these two village center designation areas. The program makes the buildings eligible for additional grant funding to support the village centers (for existing structures, not new).
- **Grant audit** – VT DPS performed a grant audit on the existing BRIC grant the town received to support the work to update the town's All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. The town is working with a consultant and work team on this project. The grant audit was 3 hours and reviewed granular details on policies, procedures, and accounting. Follow up steps and required changes were reviewed with the Selectboard and must be completed by July 5, 2024.

Motion: Carin McCarthy made a motion to approve the Local Emergency Management Plan for 2024 to be signed by Koran Cousino, Eric Cota, and Charlene Phelps. John Painter second.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: Eric Cota made a motion to approve the 2024 mowing contract from Scenic Valley Landscaping. Carin McCarthy second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: John Painter made a motion to approve the warrants for A/P and payroll as presented. Eric Cota second. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: Eric Cota moved to enter executive session per 1 VSA §313(a)(3) to discuss personnel and contracts after having determined that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the municipality at a substantial disadvantage. John Painter seconded. Rebecca Elder was invited into the session. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Motion: John Painter made a motion to exit executive session at 8:50 p.m. Eric Cota second.

Motion approved unanimously.

No action was taken.

Motion to adjourn 8:51 p.m.: Eric Cota moved, David Schmidt seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Elder, Town Administrator