



TOWN OF RICHMOND

RICHMOND TOWN CENTER
203 Bridge Street, P.O. Box 285
Richmond, Vermont 05477



Information Regarding Water And Sewer District Expansion Vote

To Be Held At A Special Meeting On Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

The following document contains information related to the vote on expansion of the water and sewer district. All underlined copy in the text in this document has links to additional information.

Please email Town Manager Josh Arneson at jarneson@richmondvt.gov with any questions.

Meeting Information

1. [Resolution for vote.](#)
2. [Warning for vote.](#)
3. The meeting and vote will be held at the Camels Hump Middle School gym on Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
4. Masks are required.
 - a) Per Camels Hump Middle School policy.
 - b) On November 4, 2021 the Governor urged Vermonters to wear a mask when in indoor settings, even when vaccinated.

Voting and Attendance

1. The meeting may not be attended virtually. All eligible voters wishing to vote must attend in person.
 - a) All public questions must be voted on by voice vote as Richmond has not approved Australian ballot for public questions per [17 VSA 2680 \(d\)](#)
 - Australian ballot is the form of voting in which voters can come to the polling place anytime that the polls are open to cast their ballot.
 - b) All items in the 2021 Town Meeting were able to be moved to Australian ballot due to the State of Emergency enacted by the Governor for COVID-19. The State of Emergency has expired and with that expiration the ability to move public questions to Australian ballot has also expired.

2. Eligible voters are all registered voters who reside in the current and proposed expanded district.
 - a) This includes:
 - Voters who live in a home that they own.
 - Voters who live in a home that they rent.
 - If multiple voters reside in the same residence within the current or proposed expanded district, they all may vote. In other words, there is not a limit of one vote per residence.
 - b) This does not include:
 - People who own property or a business within the current or proposed expanded area but do not reside in the current or proposed expanded district. People meeting this description are not eligible to vote.
 - c) All people voting must be registered voters. Residents wishing to vote who are not registered should see the [Vermont Secretary of State Website](#) for information on how to register to vote.
3. All people attending the meeting will be checked in by the Town Clerk.
 - a) Eligible voters will be directed to the seating area on the floor of the gym.
 - b) Those attending who are not eligible voters will be directed to sit in the bleachers.
 - c) This seating arrangement will help the moderator determine who is eligible to vote.
4. This will be a voice vote. Once the question is called the moderator will ask for a voice vote from the floor.
5. An eligible voter may ask for a paper ballot.
 - a) This request must be made prior to the voice vote being held. If this request is supported by 7 eligible voters then it passes.
 - b) In this case the eligible voters in attendance at the meeting would proceed to cast paper ballots. Only those eligible voters in attendance may vote.

What Water and Sewer District Expansion Would Mean

1. The question being voted on is to consider expanding the Water and Sewer District from its current western boundary in the Village, westerly along Rt. 2, generally to the town lines with Williston and Jericho. The full description is included in the warning. The following maps help to illustrate this better:
 - a) [Map of current Water and Sewer District](#). The district is marked by both a solid blue line and a dashed blue line.
 - b) [Map of proposed expansion area](#). The proposed expanded area is enclosed with a solid yellow line.
2. If the vote passes this will provide for the authority to expand the water and sewer lines into the new area, but this does not mean that the water and sewer lines must be expanded into this area at this time.
 - a) If the vote passes, water and sewer lines could be constructed in phases over multiple years.

Authority To Proceed With Construction Of Water And Sewer Lines In The Expanded District

1. If the vote passes to expand the Water and Sewer District, then the Water and Sewer Commission is the body that would decide to construct water and/or sewer pipes in the new area.
2. Most likely any new construction of water and/or sewer pipes would need to have a bond vote to aid in paying for the expansion. The Bond would be voted on by all registered voters in Richmond, regardless of if they live in the Water and Sewer District.
3. The Water and Sewer Commission is currently looking into several sources of funding to help offset the construction cost of expansion of the sewer system.

Costs to Future Customers

1. Expansion of the Water and Sewer District does not trigger fees for residents in the expanded district.
2. Fees are not levied until water and/or sewer pipes are constructed.
3. The Water and Sewer Commission has recently been studying the expansion of the sewer system only. The following estimates are based on the expansion of the sewer system only from the Village to the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park.
 - a) At the point construction of the sewer system is completed, the following fees would apply to properties that the newly constructed sewer pipes would serve:
 - i. Payback of Bond for construction
 - The chart found on the first page [in this link](#) provides a sample bond payback schedule for all properties in the proposed expanded area.
 - ii. Fixed fees related to sewer service.
 - All sewer customers are charged two fees:
 - A metered fee for gallons actually used.
 - A fixed fee per account.
 - Estimated fixed fees can be found on the second page [of this document](#). These are based on current rates and an assumption that the sewer line would be expanded to the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park in this fiscal year. Expansion in the current fiscal year is not possible, but this data was used to provide an estimate of rates. Estimated rates for the expanded system are under the column labeled “FY22 GATE Sewer”

- b) The following fees would not be due until a property connects to the system.
- i. By ordinance the Town can mandate that a property connect to the system 90 days after the system is constructed in front of the property. In the last expansion on Cochran Rd. the Town allowed property owners 7 years to connect. If the Commission decides to extend the time for connection, fixed fees and bond payment fees would be owed as soon as the line is completed and prior to connection.
 - ii. Metered fees. Estimated metered fees can be found on the second page of [this document](#). These are based on current rates and an assumption that the sewer line would be expanded to the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park in this fiscal year. Expansion in the current fiscal year is not possible, but this data was used to provide an estimate of rates. Estimated rates for the expanded system are under the column labeled "FY22 GATE Sewer"
 - iii. Water and/or sewer allocation fees, also known as Hook On Fees. Estimates of these fees can be found in Table 14 on page 29 of [this document](#).
- c) Other cost considerations for future users:
- i. Each future user would be responsible for the cost to connect to the system and the cost to install a meter.
 - An estimate on the cost to connect to the system can [be found here](#). Please note these figures do not include the cost of a meter.
 - Each customer would be required to have a water or sewer meter. Estimated purchase and installation costs of each type of meter can be [found here](#).

Effects on Rates for Current Water and Sewer Customers

1. If expansion of the sewer system from the Village to the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park were to occur, it would lower sewer rates for current users by an estimated 17% - 40%.
 - The chart on page two of [this document](#) shows the estimated rate change if the system were constructed today and all properties were connected. These are based on current rates and an assumption that the sewer line would be expanded to the Riverview Commons Mobile Home Park in this fiscal year. Expansion in the current fiscal year is not possible, but this data was used to provide an estimate of rates. Estimated rates for the expanded system are under the column labeled "FY22 GATE Sewer"