

R I C H M O N D S E L E C T B O A R D
R E G U L A R M E E T I N G
D e c e m b e r 1 7 , 2 0 1 2 M I N U T E S

Members Present: Chris Granda, Chair; June Heston, Vice Chair; Neil Boyden; Amy Lord; Ashley Lucht
Absent: None
Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle, Lister; Margo Austin; Lisa Eriksson; Bruce Bailey; Cara LaBounty, Lister; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Chair Granda called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Public Comment

Chair Granda mentioned that the Selectboard's thoughts and prayers go out to the children, family and staff of Sandy Hook Elementary school in Connecticut, regarding the recent violence there. He then opened the floor for public comment but there was none.

Discussion of Recreation Director – Margo Austin and Lisa Eriksson

The Manager explained that a committee had met, consisting of Amy Lord, Margo Austin, Lisa Eriksson, Ian Bender, Pete Gosselin, and the Manager. In this meeting, a job description was discussed and an estimate of the number of hours that might be necessary in the first year, which amounted to about \$10,000 worth of staff time. In order to offset some of these expenses, fees would have to be increased and the scope of the job would grow over time to encompass more than just managing the town's fields at Volunteer's Green and Browns Court but cover races, special events and possibly more youth sports.

Chair Granda asked if this would be in place this Spring. The Manager said that this discussion was in the context of the FY2014 budget which would begin in July. Lisa Eriksson said that the difficulties of last Spring would probably not be repeated this year, because the concession stand is operational and the season would be more normal.

Margo Austin said that over time, fees may increase or expand. Mr. Boyden suggested adding administrative fees to some events. Lisa Eriksson said that this position might also serve the senior citizens also.

Bruce Bailey asked if this person would also do grant research, and was answered that this was in the sample job description.

After more discussion, Ms. Lord offered a motion to place the following question on the ballot for Town Meeting in March of 2013:

“Shall the voters of Richmond approve an additional expenditure of \$10,000 to the FY2014 Budget to fund a part-time Recreation Director?”

Ms. Lucht seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

The Manager noted that the committee was requesting that this be voted as an Australian Ballot item, and for that to happen the Selectboard would have to approve a special meeting to decide that question.

1 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to move the question to a public vote of the voters to consider it being an
2 Australian Ballot article at a meeting on January 17th at 7:00 pm in Town Center, and was seconded by
3 Mr. Boyden and the motion carried 5-0.

4 5 Discussion on Transportation Alternatives Grant and Route 2 Pedestrian/Bike Path

6
7 The Manager explained that several people, including Representative Anne O'Brien and Trails
8 Committee chair Ian Stokes, had requested that the town investigate this grant to help get the bike path
9 from the village to the park and ride. The Manager looked into this, and the town was not ready to
10 construct the path, so the only option would be for planning and scoping. Bryan Davis of the CCRPC
11 said that scoping of this project was on their workplan already, so the town's best bet was to use the
12 CCRPC to scope the project, and apply for the Transportation Alternatives grant later.

13
14 Ms. Lucht said that this was a long term plan, and asked how the town would maintain the path? What
15 would the long-term costs be?

16
17 Mr. Boyden said that the two options were extending the shoulder or creating a new path. Over time
18 the path would be more of a recreation path than a bicycle path.

19
20 Bruce Bailey said that shrinking travel lanes would not work.

21
22 The Selectboard discussed the item further, but agreed that the town would use the assistance of
23 CCRPC to conduct the scoping for the project.

24 25 **2. Other Business**

26 27 Town Manager Discussions

28
29 Chair Granda said that the Selectboard had wanted to hold an interview of the Town Manager
30 candidate, who was Geoffrey Urbanik, to ask certain questions to help the public understand the
31 transition and what goals or objectives there might be.

32
33 Chair Granda asked Mr. Urbanik where he believed the line between the role of the Manager and the
34 role of the Selectboard was. Mr. Urbanik replied that from day to day, the role of accomplishing tasks
35 and solving the issues from the public would be handled by the Manager. The Selectboard would be
36 responsible for developing policies not only to run the town, but setting priorities on what gets
37 accomplished.

38
39 Ms. Lucht asked how does the Selectboard's role change. Mr. Urbanik said that he believed that the
40 Selectboard would no longer be handling personnel issues or getting involved in how work gets
41 accomplished by town staff. The Manager was responsible for making that happen, and the
42 Selectboard would hold the Manager accountable.

43
44 Chair Granda asked what Mr. Urbanik felt would be the most significant changes. Mr. Urbanik
45 replied that he believed that the transition would have the greatest impact on the employees, who
46 might not immediately accept the changes, where there was no appeal of personnel decisions to the
47 Selectboard. While the employees have been in this system already for the past year, it would still be
48 a significant event when an unpopular decision was made.

49

1 Ms. Lord asked what the biggest role might be. Mr. Urbanik replied that personnel management was
2 likely the thing that took the most time, and financial management and project management followed.

3
4 Ms. Lucht asked if there would be regular meetings with employees. Mr. Urbanik said that every two
5 weeks there would be department head meetings where information could be shared.

6
7 Chair Granda said that he expected that a list of goals, and project tracking, should also be kept and
8 distributed regularly.

9
10 Chair Granda asked what kind of public outreach could be done to introduce the public to the
11 transition. Mr. Urbanik suggested a Saturday morning meet and greet with the Manager, and it was
12 agreed that January 26th would be the day for this, and also an employee training session in January
13 was necessary.

14
15 Chair Granda said that the last stage of this was to offer an employment agreement. The final version
16 of the document presented at the last meeting had been unchanged. There was some discussion on the
17 amount of professional bond would be required per the Charter, and the Selectboard agreed that
18 \$50,000 was acceptable.

19
20 Mr. Boyden offered a motion to enter an employment agreement between the Town of Richmond and
21 Geoffrey Urbanik, with an effective bond of \$50,000 where the Town pays the premium, effective the
22 date of signing until June 30, 2016. Ms. Lucht seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

23
24 The Manager accepted and thanked the Selectboard for their support.

25 26 Listers Errors and Omissions

27
28 Cara LaBounty explained that there was one final correction for the year, which was a square footage
29 adjustment to one property. Ms. LaBounty requested that the Selectboard acknowledge the filing of
30 the certificate.

31
32 Ms. Lord offered a motion to acknowledge the filed certificate of Errors and Omissions by the listers,
33 and was seconded by Ms. Lucht. The motion carried 5-0.

34 35 Discussion on FY2014 Budget

36
37 The Manager explained the recent changes, according to the discussions from the prior Selectboard
38 meeting. The only outstanding issues were the Listers Budget and how to handle Depot Street.

39
40 The Manager explained that the listers had requested that their budget be modified to decrease the map
41 updates line, decrease the reappraisal reserve contribution and increase the salaries.

42
43 Ms. LaBounty explained that she had wanted to separate the cost center for the listers to be able to
44 compare with other towns. She said that in some surrounding towns, the per-parcel amount budgeted
45 exceeded \$20, where in Richmond it was only \$5.42 per parcel. She said that the true cost was much
46 more than this, and the listers had not received any cost of living adjustments since 2005 when the
47 current rate of pay was set. She wanted the listers budget and the pay to be brought in line with what
48 the job is. For the map updates, once they are made this year the ongoing costs are likely to be much
49 lower.

50

1 She added that the CLA was up and the COD was down, which were showing that the tax base was
2 remaining stable and kept up to date. She added that while no reappraisal was necessary now, the
3 listers could push for one if they felt it was warranted.

4
5 Ms. Lord asked about how much a reappraisal might cost, and the Manager said perhaps \$120,000.

6
7 The Manager asked what the lister workload might look like in FY14. Ms. LaBounty said that the
8 listers would be over budget in FY13, and this doesn't have to do with a high workload but an
9 underfunded budget. She said the town now has to pay for what a volunteer did before.

10
11 Mary Houle said that lister activities will increase after April 1st, or after anything that triggers a
12 building permit. Ms. LaBounty said that they had to verify that the lister cards would be accurate.

13
14 Ms. Lucht asked if the higher salaries request was in anticipation of a third lister, and how would the
15 work be shared?

16
17 Ms. LaBounty said there were plenty of things to do, and if the funds weren't spent they could always
18 be put into the reserve.

19
20 Chair Granda said the Selectboard hadn't made allowances to go over budget. He didn't want to
21 "keep up with the Joneses" in lister budgets. He gave kudos to Michael Hampton for volunteering for
22 the job, but it is now difficult to ask taxpayers to pay more money for this function.

23
24 Ms. LaBounty said the town was given these services for free before, but now the listers have to be
25 paid.

26
27 There was some discussion on budget numbers, and arguments in favor and against increasing the
28 lister budget. Chair Granda asked how the Selectboard would like to split the state revenues to fund
29 the lister budget.

30
31 Ms. Heston said that Ms. LaBounty's logic was correct, but what needs to be done and what will three
32 listers do?

33
34 Mary Houle said they were doing the bare minimum now, and there was plenty more that could be
35 done. Ms. LaBounty said she could not say how many hours were needed. Ms. Heston suggested the
36 job duties be divided.

37
38 There was discussion on moving \$2,000 from maps to salaries, moving \$3,500 from the reappraisal
39 reserve to salaries, and funding an additional \$2,500 for salaries, to make the salary line \$16,000.

40
41 Chair Granda and Amy Lord opposed any additional funding for salaries beyond what was already
42 accounted for with state revenues.

43
44 Mary Houle requested that the per hour wage be increased from \$12 to \$13 per hour.

45
46 Ms. Lucht advocated for the additional \$2,500 in local support of the salaries line increase, and Ms.
47 Heston agreed.

48
49 Mr. Boyden asked if the hours were there, the town should fund the work.

50

1 After additional discussion, Ms. Lucht offered a motion to amend the listers budget to remove \$2,000
2 from maps, remove \$3,500 from the reappraisal reserve, and add these amounts to the salary line with
3 an additional \$2,500 from taxpayer support to the salaries line, making it \$16,000. Ms. Heston
4 seconded the motion.

5
6 Ms. Lord said this was a big jump, and the Selectboard should take a closer look at how the office is
7 structured.

8
9 The motion carried 3-2 with Ms. Lord and Chair Granda voting against.

10
11 The Selectboard agreed that the public hearing on the FY2014 Budget would be on January 7th at 7:30
12 pm, in Town Center.

13 Financial Reports

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16 The Selectboard reviewed the financial reports and ordered they be posted online.

17 Approval of Minutes of December 3, 2012

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19
20 Mr. Boyden offered a motion to approve the minutes as amended with minor edits, and was seconded
21 by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Ms. Heston abstaining.

22 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

23
24
25 Ms. Lucht reported that she continued to look into website options and was excited about the
26 presentation coming up in January. The town could get a new domain for both website and email.

27
28 Chair Granda asked if the town could use any small, local web designers. There was some discussion,
29 and these services would be the subject of an RFP early next year.

30
31 ECOS Grant and Municipal Planning Grant update – the Manager reported that the town did not get
32 the Municipal Planning Grant. So, the only part of the grant that was obtained was the \$40,000 from
33 the ECOS Grant. The scope of work would be modified to fit the budget, and the grant agreement was
34 up for approval under the consent agenda.

35
36 Ms. Lucht asked for an update on the audit at the next meeting.

37 Casing Development Request

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39
40 The Manager explained a request from the Casing Development, which owned the cheese factory,
41 complaining that they never received a tax bill and the late fees should not be assessed to them. The
42 Selectboard discussed this, and said that they have no jurisdiction over the matter and the Board of
43 Abatement should get involved.

44 Consent Agenda

45
46
47 The Manager explained that the four items were as follows: there was a Right of Way permit for work
48 to be done by a cable installer along the side of Cemetery Road, with no road openings; the grant
49 agreement with the CCRPC ECOS project; appointment of a short-term zoning officer to handle

1 Cathleen Gent's Certificate of Occupancy for a home she is having built; and the moving of the
2 January 21st meeting date to January 22nd.

3
4 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the consent agenda and was seconded by Ms. Lord and the
5 motion carried 5-0.

6
7 Ms. Lucht added that the Water Commissioners meeting should likewise be moved to January 22nd.

8
9 The Manager presented a purchase order for the order of new Police radios that operate on a narrow
10 band. This was being paid for from the same grant that purchased the Highway Department radios, for
11 the same purpose.

12
13 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 2652 in the amount of \$14,334 to Burlington
14 Communications to purchase narrow band police radios, under an Emergency Management grant. Ms.
15 Heston seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

16 Depot Street Funding

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18
19 The Manager said that after the listers budget, this item was still open. The question was did the
20 Selectboard wish to make this an article, and also if they wished to schedule a meeting to see if it
21 would be voted on by Australian ballot.

22
23 There was some discussion. Ms. Lucht offered a motion to place the following question on the ballot
24 for Town Meeting in March 2013:

25
26 "Shall the voters approve of funding for the Depot Street parking lot with a \$20,000 appropriation in
27 the Town budget in each of the next five years?"

28
29 Ms. Lord seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

30
31 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to hold a special meeting of the voters to decide the question of should this
32 be an Australian Ballot article, on January 17, 2013 in Town Center at 7:00 pm. This was the same
33 time as the hearing on the Recreation Director question. Ms. Lord seconded the motion, and the
34 motion carried 5-0.

35
36 It was agreed that Mr. Boyden and Ms. Lucht would review the warrants for January.

37 Executive Session: VYCC Tax Appeal

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40 Chair Granda requested an executive session to discuss the VYCC Tax Appeal with the attorney.

41
42 Ms. Heston offered a motion to enter executive session, at 9:25 pm, to discuss the VYCC Tax Appeal
43 with the Manager and Brian Monaghan, the attorney for the case. Ms. Lucht seconded the motion and
44 it carried 5-0.

45
46 At 10:05 PM Ms. Lucht offered a motion to adjourn the executive session and was seconded by Ms.
47 Heston. The motion carried 5-0.

48 **3. Adjourn**

49
50 Motion by Ms. Lucht to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Heston. So voted.