

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
J a n u a r y 2 2 , 2 0 1 3 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; Joana Cummings and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Chair Granda called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

1. Public Comment

Chair Granda asked if there was any comment from the public but there was none.

2. Presentations and Discussion Items

Town Website Discussion – Joanna Cummings and Ashley Lucht

Ms. Lucht had asked Joanna Cummings, a website consultant, to come speak to the Selectboard about some of her past projects and options for the Richmond website. Ms. Cummings said she had been doing web design since the 1990s, and as a public servant. She has worked with the Snelling Center and other towns in Vermont to improve online civic engagement. She has built a “Wordpress” template that the town could use (for a fee).

Ms. Cummings reviewed some ideas for structure and content, how to maintain the site as ADA accessible and offered her help with setup and transfer of current content. She suggested privacy and internet policies to control the content of the site. She recommended avoiding paid advertising to keep the site neutral.

Ms. Lucht said that the town could reserve a domain name for free through the state, such as Richmond.vt.gov. She asked if the town could also get an email domain like this, and Ms. Cummings said she would try and find the answer.

Ms. Cummings added that the organization that set up the Snelling Center site (Vermont Rural Development Council) through a grant is doing a follow up project called Vermont’s Digital Economy and was working with towns impacted by Hurricane Irene to set up websites.

There was discussion on the town website. Ms. Lucht asked how much we spent on our current site per year, and the Manager said he would find that out.

There was additional discussion, and the Selectboard thanked Ms. Cummings for her presentation.

Appointment of Lauck Parke to the Planning Commission

Lauck Parke had submitted a letter of interest to the Selectboard for serving on the Planning Commission. Chair Granda thanked Mr. Parke for expressing an interest and Ms. Lucht said she appreciated the candor of his letter.

1 Ms. Heston asked Mr. Parke why he was interested, and Mr. Parke said that he had been active in the
2 defeat of the zoning proposal but he didn't want to be a "spoiler" and many others may have felt
3 similar to only certain parts of the proposal. He wanted to try and bring some of the voices of
4 opposition into the matter. He didn't claim to represent the 1,300 people who voted against it but
5 wanted to move certain revisions forward.

6
7 The Selectboard agreed that Mr. Parke's interest was welcomed. Ms. Lucht offered a motion to
8 appoint Lauck Parke to a vacancy on the Planning Commission and was seconded by Ms. Heston and
9 the motion carried 5-0.

10
11 There being one vacancy on the current five-member board, the Selectboard asked which of the three
12 prior vacancies on the Planning Commission this was, but agreed it should be the one with the longest
13 remaining term. This term ended up expiring on April 1, 2016.

14
15 Ms. Lord asked if Mr. Parke could also continue to serve on the Economic Development Committee
16 and he said if there was no conflict of interest he would continue to do so.

17
18 Ms. Houle noted that a policy existed that if someone had served two consecutive terms and someone
19 volunteered to take a spot, then the new person would get the seat and the former member would have
20 to step down.

21 22 **3. Other Business**

23 24 Delinquent Tax Collector

25
26 The Manager explained that with the charter amendments approved last year the Delinquent Tax
27 Collector will now be an appointed position. The current collector, Laurie Brisbin, was serving until
28 the expiration of her term at the next town meeting and the Manager felt she was doing a good job.
29 The Manager read some numbers from the past two town reports about delinquencies collected, and
30 noted that the town had not held a tax sale in two years.

31
32 Ms. Lucht asked if we published names of delinquents, and the Manager said that was only done prior
33 to a tax sale. Ms. Heston asked if it was possible to do this at other times and the Manager said that it
34 was. There was discussion about a delinquent tax policy, and the Manager said that it would need to
35 be developed, but currently it was up to the Delinquent Tax Collector to decide on how to handle
36 delinquencies and when to hold a tax sale.

37
38 Ms. Houle said that the interest rates were good, and that a town could earn money and also
39 lienholders.

40
41 The Selectboard asked if Ms. Brisbin could come to a future meeting.

42 43 Approval of Minutes of January 7, 2013

44
45 Mr. Boyden offered a motion to approve the minutes of January 7, 2013 with minor amendments and
46 was seconded by Ms. Heston. The motion carried 5-0.

47 48 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

49

1 Ms. Lord reported that the Economic Development Committee had met on Friday, and they were
2 planning a breakfast with the Western Slopes Business Association for February 28th. The town as
3 offering to contribute a small amount of money for the breakfast. The town was trying to connect
4 more with the business community.

5
6 There were several people at the last Planning Commission meeting to discuss the future of the
7 creamery site, and the Economic Development Committee supported efforts to move this project
8 forward. Ms. Lord mentioned that water rates were an issue, and asked how should the town invest in
9 its water system and what kind of rates should we see? She acknowledged that there were many
10 infrastructure challenges.

11
12 Ms. Lucht said she had spoken to Heidi Bormann, a member of the Economic Development
13 Committee, on these issues also, and the possibility of getting a large water user on the creamery
14 parcel.

15
16 Ms. Houle said that water and sewer allotments on the creamery have been maintained by the current
17 owner, but maybe another user could use these credits?

18
19 The manager reviewed the financial reports. The Selectboard requested additional notations on the
20 budget status report. Mr. Boyden asked if we were paying the additional amounts on the Richmond
21 Rescue payments and the manager said no, we were waiting on additional information and primarily
22 how Rescue would address the reporting to the Selectboard issue. Ms. Heston requested we have
23 another meeting with them to resolve these issues.

24 25 Policy Initiatives

26
27 The Manager reviewed some of the policies that needed to be revised. There were three areas:
28 personnel; finance and internet. Chair Granda offered to help with personnel policies, Ms. Lucht
29 offered to help with internet policies and Ms. Heston offered to help with the financial policies.

30
31 The Manager reminded everyone of the January 26th meeting to decide the Australian Ballot issues for
32 the Depot Street funding article and the Recreation Director article.

33
34 Ms. Lucht asked about the audit and the Manager said he was reviewing responses to the findings, and
35 the final audit should be released shortly. He asked if the Selectboard would like to review this in
36 February, and they agreed to try and have this on the February 19th agenda.

37
38 Ms. Lucht said that the meeting on February 18th should be moved to February 19th, and offered a
39 motion to reschedule. Ms. Lord seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

40
41 The Manager also noted that February 25th would be the public information session for the two articles
42 mentioned above.

43 44 Consent Agenda

45
46 The Manager explained that there were no changes to the 2013 Certificate of Highway mileage, the
47 formal resolution to renew the Village Center Designation was for consideration, and a request from
48 the Green Mountain MS Society for the Stage Race to use roads – there was no staging for the race
49 just a ride through.

50

1 Ms. Heston offered a motion to approve the consent agenda and was seconded by Ms. Lord and the
2 motion carried 5-0.

3
4 Ms. Heston announced the Richmond Historical Society and the Richmond Free Library would hold a
5 concert, and asked that the Selectboard approve a resolution on the 200th anniversary of the church to
6 raise awareness of the activities going on this year. They were selling tee shirts also.

7
8 Ms. Lucht noted that the warrants were reviewed and found to be acceptable. It was agreed that in
9 February, Mr. Boyden and Chair Granda would review the warrants.

10
11 Chair Granda called for an executive session to discuss personnel issues. Ms. Heston offered a motion
12 to enter an executive session to discuss personnel issues at 8:30 pm and was seconded by Ms. Lucht.
13 The motion carried 5-0.

14
15 Ms. Heston offered a motion to adjourn the executive session at 9:20 pm and was seconded by Ms.
16 Lord and the motion carried 5-0.

17
18 **4. Adjourn**

19 Motion by Ms. Heston to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Lucht. So voted.