

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
July 15, 2013 MINUTES**

Members Present: June Heston, Chair; Chris Granda; Ashley Lucht; Taylor Yeates
 Absent: Amy Lord
 Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; Anne McLaughlin;
 Dave Ferrerra; Harold Irish; Bard Hill; Sean Foley; Bruce LaBounty;
 Angela Cote; Donna Lyons; Mark Fausel; Bob Marquis; Brad Elliot;
 Dennis Doherty; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting
 for MMCTV Channel 15.

June Heston called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Ms. Heston asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mr. Irish asked if the Bridge Street Bridge was safe. The Manager replied that some surface cracks were identified and an epoxy sealant recommended by the State. The Manager agreed that some preventative maintenance should be done, but there was no danger to the bridge.

2. Items for Discussion with Those Present

Planning Commission Interviews

Four candidates interested in the Planning Commission spots were present to be interviewed: Anne McLaughlin, Dennis Doherty, Sean Foley and Mark Hughes.

Ms. McLaughlin explained why she was interested. She was a twelve year resident of Richmond, lived on Snipe Ireland Road and was an accounting familiar with budgeting and planning.

Mr. Granda asked if she had ever served on the board before and Ms. McLaughlin said no.

Ms. Lucht asked if she had followed the zoning issue from last year, and Ms. McLaughlin said she had, and attended some of the planning sessions. Ms. Lucht asked if she had the time to commit to the board and Ms. McLaughlin said yes.

Mr. Granda asked if she was developing any property in town and Ms. McLaughlin said no.

Ms. Lucht asked if she would be willing to consider an opening on the Development Review Board and Ms. McLaughlin said yes.

Mr. Yeates asked about Ms. McLaughlin’s work experience and if it was mostly financial. Ms. McLaughlin said yes, it was mostly financial, and part of the Planning Commission duties were reviewing the Capital Plan and she would enjoy that.

Ms. Heston asked how Ms. McLaughlin found out about the position and she said from neighbors.

Ms. Heston thanked Ms. McLaughlin and asked Mr. Doherty to come forward.

1
2 Dennis Doherty had been a resident since 2005, but had grown up here and moved away. He
3 mentioned he went to school here. He became interested in serving in the town around the time of the
4 Irene flood, and felt people were prevented from getting FEMA monies because of town regulations.
5 He didn't want regulations to be a burden.

6
7 Ms. Lucht asked if Mr. Doherty would be willing to consider the DRB appointment and he said he
8 might be. Ms. Lucht asked if Mr. Doherty was familiar with the regulations and he said he was.

9
10 Mr. Granda asked if he had any property he was planning to develop and Mr. Doherty said no, not as
11 his business.

12
13 Mr. Yeates asked what skills he would bring, and Mr. Doherty said he worked mostly in sales but
14 previously worked in manufacturing and he was familiar with working within government regulations.

15
16 Ms. Heston asked if he had time to commit to the board and Mr. Doherty said yes. Mr. Granda asked
17 if he had ever volunteered for the town before and Mr. Doherty said no.

18
19 Ms. Heston thanked Mr. Doherty and asked Mr. Hughes to come forward.

20
21 Mark Hughes explained his interest in the Planning Commission. He lived in town for quite a while
22 and lived in the flood zone. He had a claim with FEMA during the flood and he's also on the water
23 system as a customer.

24
25 Ms. Lucht asked if he would be interested in the DRB and Mr. Hughes said no. Ms. Lucht asked if he
26 was familiar with the proposed regulations and he said he was, and knew that it was pretty wordy and
27 not too legible. He is interested in the zoning materials and knows that it is important.

28
29 Ms. Lucht asked if he had the time to commit and Mr. Hughes said yes. Mr. Granda asked if he had
30 ever worked commercially as a developer and Mr. Hughes said no, and he had never served on a
31 volunteer board in town.

32
33 Ms. Heston thanked Mr. Hughes and asked Mr. Foley to come forward.

34
35 Sean Foley explained why he was interested in the Planning Commission. He lived on East Hill Road
36 and was a fifteen year resident. He felt that the regulations entailed consensus building. He was not
37 interesting in building and he has been a volunteer recreation coordinator. He was aware of the zoning
38 issues and felt those most affected by it were those who had flood issues.

39
40 Ms. Lucht asked if he had time to commit and Mr. Foley said yes. Ms. Lucht asked if he would
41 consider the DRB and Mr. Foley said he would.

42
43 Ms. Heston thanked Mr. Foley and said the board would take nominations and vote.

44
45 Ms. Lucht felt the Selectboard might need time to think this over. Mr. Granda suggested that Ms.
46 Lord would like to participate in the vote when she was present.

47
48 Lauke Park asked if there was anything precluding the board from going to nine members. He felt that
49 the recent meeting with five members was exuberating, and they were looking forward to seven, but
50 maybe nine was better.

1
2 Ms. Heston asked if this was possible, and the Manager said he would have to see if there was
3 anything preventing it.

4
5 Mark Fausel said he thought all candidates had excellent qualifications. He felt that seven members
6 should be the minimum allowed, but wasn't sure that nine was the best way to go. It may be more
7 productive or lead to more tail-chasing. He asked to stay at seven for the short term.

8
9 Ms. Lucht said we might lose interest if we don't appoint members tonight.

10
11 Ms. Heston mentioned to the volunteers that if they do not get appointed please try to keep interested
12 and find other boards they might want to serve on.

13
14 Mr. Yeates said he wouldn't interview for a position and then hire the same day. He felt it would be
15 appropriate to wait. Mr. Yeates offered a motion to table the vote until the next meeting and was
16 seconded by Mr. Granda.

17
18 Bruce LaBounty said that he would love to see appointments now and they have a meeting this week.

19
20 Ms. Heston felt that the Selectboard should not wait, and the chance to get volunteers is fleeting.

21
22 Angela Cote said that there is a precedent that the Selectboard could vote at the same meeting as
23 interviewing.

24
25 The motion failed 1-2-1 with Ms. Heston and Ms. Lucht voting against and Mr. Granda abstaining.

26
27 Ms. Heston said that the Selectboard should nominate.

28
29 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to nominate Mark Hughes to the Planning Commission for a term expiring
30 in March of 2015, raising the membership to six, and was seconded by Mr. Granda. The motion
31 carried 3-0-1 with Mr. Yeates abstaining.

32
33 Mr. Granda offered a motion to appoint Sean Foley to the Planning Commission for a term expiring in
34 March of 2015, raising the membership to seven, and was seconded by Ms. Lucht. The motion carried
35 3-0-1 with Mr. Yeates abstaining.

36
37 There was some discussion about nominating to the Development Review Board.

38
39 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to nominate Anne McLaughlin to the Development Review Board and
40 was seconded by Mr. Granda and the motion carried 4-0.

41
42 Appointment to the Water Commission

43
44 Ms. Heston asked Bard Hill to come forward. Bard Hill explained his interest in filling the vacancy on
45 the Water Commission which occurred with the resignation of Harold Irish.

46
47 Mr. Hill explained that he was a twenty year resident of Richmond, and was on the water and sewer
48 system. He had not served on other town committees but his volunteering was limited to coaching.
49 He worked for the State at the Agency for Disability and Aging, as the director of policy and research.
50 His perspective on serving was that it was a crummy job but someone had to do it. He didn't know all

1 of the issues, but he had seen the messages and was aware of the changes. He wanted to keep the town
2 center viable and keep the affordability in housing.

3
4 Ms. Lucht asked why he wanted to serve and Mr. Hill said that he wanted to find a balance between
5 the needs of the users and the needs of the system. He lived on Tilden which was a mixed residential
6 neighborhood with people from all walks of life.

7
8 Mr. Granda asked if he had the time to commit and Mr. Hill said yes.

9
10 Harold Irish asked if Mr. Hill was a homeowner. Mr. Hill said yes, for about twenty years.

11
12 Ms. Lucht asked if there were anyone else interested in the position and no one responded.

13
14 Mr. Granda offered a motion to appoint Bard Hill to the Water Commission for a term expiring in
15 March 2014 and was seconded by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0.

16
17 Ms. Lucht noted that the next meeting would be on July 16th at 6:30 pm to pay bills only, there would
18 be no regular meeting. Substantial business could not be done with only three members. There would
19 be a special meeting in August.

20 21 Governance Committee Interviews

22
23 Ms. Heston asked Brad Elliot to come forward. Mr. Elliot explained his interest in serving on the
24 Governance Committee. Mr. Elliot said that he has lived here for twenty one years and served on the
25 Conservation Commission and as a Times Ink reporter. He had a pretty good feel for how committees
26 should work and is open to researching the merit for new ideas.

27
28 Mr. Yeates asked Mr. Elliot if he had ever been a lister, and Mr. Elliot said no. Mr. Yeates asked if
29 Mr. Elliot had worked on committees besides the Conservation Commission, and Mr. Elliot said he
30 was on the Richmond Land Trust and the "Keeping Track" education group. He owned a marketing
31 and communication business. He felt he could elicit facts going into a decision as well as getting out
32 facts.

33
34 Ms. Lucht asked what the timeframe was for a recommendation from the Committee, and Mr. Yeates
35 said it should be done by January.

36
37 Ms. Heston asked what might the outcome be, especially in light of new laws, and the Manager said
38 that the basic issue was whether or not to change, and if so, to amend the charter of utilize the new
39 legal process.

40
41 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to appoint Brad Elliot to the Governance Committee and was seconded by
42 Mr. Yeates and the motion carried 4-0.

43 44 **3. Other Business**

45 46 Discussion on Ammonia at former Creamery, and Redevelopment

47
48 The Manager reported that the owner, Casing Development, LLC, had hired EnPro, a company
49 specializing in hazardous materials cleanup, to remove the ammonia. It was determined that the
50 refrigeration system was clean but the tank still held some ammonia. EnPro was working on

1 completing a process to obtain a removal permit from the State of Vermont, which was taking longer
2 than expected. Following obtaining a permit, a seven day waiting period would be necessary.

3
4 The big picture was how to move forward with this property. Several people have come forward to
5 say that the environmental issues on the site were prohibiting the sale due to high costs. Some were
6 encouraging the town to get involved to make something happen. The Manager felt that now was the
7 time to have this discussion with the Selectboard.

8
9 Ms. Lucht felt that if anything is going to get done on this property, the town would have to do it.
10 Private cleanup costs can be prohibitive.

11
12 Ms. Heston said that if the town doesn't own the property, nothing could be done. If it is really cost
13 prohibitive then why should the town get involved?

14
15 Ms. Lucht said that she was not sure about the costs since she was not privy to private discussions, but
16 Brownfields grants were available to towns, but not private landowners.

17
18 Mr. Granda said that tomorrow he was attending a meeting with the Richmond Economic
19 Development Committee and Anne O'Brien where this issue was going to be discussed. Maybe the
20 town should be an interim owner, to get things cleaned up.

21
22 Ms. Lucht wasn't sure that she wanted to have the town own the property but how else could we make
23 something happen?

24
25 Lauke Park said that the REDC had been meeting with someone regarding how things had been done
26 in Waterbury and Barre.

27
28 There was considerable discussion. Several members of the audience warned against the town getting
29 involved and suggesting that other properties might be better suited for economic development or that
30 the developer's asking price was too high and we shouldn't subsidize it.

31
32 Anne McLaughlin asked what the ammonia emergency was. The Manager explained the history of
33 the ammonia at the creamery, its hazardous nature and the current risk of exposure due to tampering or
34 deterioration of the building and tank.

35
36 Mr. Yeates said that he has never heard of Richmond purchasing property in this manner, and it was
37 not a bad investment. He said that it will get developed, sooner or later, and someone needed to
38 facilitate a deal. He felt that the town was in a position to facilitate something sooner, and take action.
39 People shouldn't be scared of the idea, and he wasn't looking to sink money to develop it, but rather
40 get the property suitable for development by private money. This wasn't about making the owner rich,
41 but enriching the town.

42
43 The Selectboard requested that the REDC report on their discussion on August 5th.

44
45 Report on Flooding and Costs

46
47 The Manager reported on the flooding of roads over the past six weeks, and that the costs were
48 estimated to be over \$75,000 in repairs and overtime. The Manager thanked the Highway Department
49 for all of their work, on weekends and on July 4th, and for getting things put back together quickly.
50 There was still much work to do but the roads were all open. The Manager added that several private

1 roads were washed out that were ineligible for FEMA assistance. There was some discussion on this
2 but the Manager said that there was currently no program to provide assistance.

3
4 Angela Cote said that she heard on VPR that the State had \$2 million in surplus that they were now
5 spending on road repairs.

6
7 It was suggested that the storm drains be cleaned to prevent street flooding again later in the year.
8 Bruce LaBounty suggested having the Fire Department use their trucks to jet out culverts where they
9 could.

10 11 Approval of Minutes

12 13 Minutes of June 24, 2013

14
15 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the minutes of June 24, 2013, with minor edits, and was
16 seconded by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0.

17 18 Minutes of July 1, 2013

19
20 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the minutes of July 1, 2013, with minor edits, and was
21 seconded by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0.

22 23 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

24
25 The Manager reported that Depot Street was submitted to the railroad for approval, and had obtained a
26 Development Review Board approval. Bid documents were being drafted and would be released
27 before the end of the month.

28
29 Ms. Heston and Mr. Yeates spoke about parking and traffic at Jolina Court/Railroad Street
30 intersections with Bridge Street. Bruce LaBounty said that the Planning Commission had voted to
31 approve some changes, which the Selectboard would see shortly.

32 33 Green Mountain Stage Race

34
35 The Manager reported that a bicycle race on Cochran Road would take place on July 25th. This was a
36 timed stage race, with each bicycle traveling alone at timed intervals. This has been done in the past
37 with few complaints.

38
39 Angela Cote said she had experienced this race in the past and not felt that it was disruptive, but what
40 would happen if the town denied this?

41
42 Mary Houle said she needed a way for residents to complain if there were issues, such as a real phone
43 number.

44
45 The Selectboard consented that the race would be allowed.

46 47 Update on Richmond v. Bordeaux

48

1 The Manager reported that shortly the town would seek bids to clean the property, but nothing would
2 happen before August. Mary Houle asked how the town would pay for this, and the Manager said he
3 was not sure at this time, but a lien would also be placed on the property to recover costs.

4

5 Fireworks and Parade

6

7 The Manager explained that the Parade and Fireworks Committee had decided that the new date for
8 both would be August 24th. This was the only date the fireworks were available, but everything would
9 take place on that day.

10

11 Approval of warrants

12

13 After some questions, the warrants were approved. It was agreed that Ms. Lucht would review the
14 August warrants.

15

16 **4. Adjourn**

17 Motion by Mr. Granda to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Lucht. So voted.