

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
M a r c h 5 , 2 0 1 2 M I N U T E S

Members Present: Jon Kart; Neil Boyden; Erik Filkorn; Chris Granda; June Heston
Absent: None
Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Administrator; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Clint Buxton, Town Moderator; Mary Houle; Bruce and Sheila Bailey; Cathleen Gent, Town Planner; Alan Buck, Chief of Police; Rod West; Kendall Chamberlin, Wastewater Superintendent; Dennis Gile; Amy Lord and there was no one from MMCTV to tape the meeting.

Chair Kart called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

1. Public Comment

Chair Kart asked if there was any comment from the public.

Mary Houle asked about the recent mailing that was sent out regarding the Selectboard's position on certain Australian Ballot articles, and how much it cost. Chair Kart said about \$750. Ms. Houle asked how this would be paid back. Chair Kart said that this had not been discussed.

2. Public Hearings: 2012 Town Plan

2012 Town Plan

Mr. Filkorn offered a motion to open the public hearing on the 2012 Town Plan and was seconded by Mr. Boyden and the motion carried 5-0.

Mary Houle asked if it was possible to make a recommendation that the Selectboard recommend that the Town Plan be effective for ten years instead of five.

Chair Kart asked Cathleen Gent if this amendment could be recommended with the changes to Emergency Services that were proposed for the updated Town Plan currently in development. Ms. Gent said yes.

Mr. Filkorn offered a motion to close the public hearing and was seconded by Mr. Boyden and the motion carried 5-0.

There being no further discussion Mr. Filkorn offered a motion to adopt the 2012 Town Plan as presented and was seconded by Mr. Granda and the motion carried 5-0.

Police Humvee Discussion

Chair Kart said that this item had generated much discussion and asked Chief Alan Buck to explain to the public what had happened.

Chief Buck explained his reasons for requesting a surplus military humvee. He explained that this was not a civilian model, and the department did not currently have a special purpose emergency vehicle. A Chevy Tahoe would cost \$36,000 plus outfitting costs of \$3,000 - \$5,000 and wouldn't always be needed. So the Chief decided that this would be a cost effective way of meeting the need for such a vehicle. It would also not be a patrol vehicle and it wasn't equipped for this purpose and wasn't

1 capable. It would be used in emergencies, such as the recent flooding, where this vehicle could go
2 where others could not.

3
4 Bruce Bailey said he was in favor of the idea, but would this vehicle be expensive to maintain. The
5 Chief answered that it currently has four good tires, and he can get used tires for \$300 each or through
6 military surplus. Most of the maintenance was anticipated to be done in-house, and the second vehicle
7 was slated to be a parts-only vehicle so most parts were on-hand.

8
9 Mary Houle asked where these vehicles are stored. The Chief answered that they would be at the
10 Highway Garage eventually but right now they were off-site at Blackfork Towing. Ms. Houle asked if
11 there was no room at the Fire Department, and the Chief said that there was not and it may also be in a
12 parking spot at Town Center. He said that the vehicle should be exercised at least once per week to
13 keep it in running order. Ms. Houle asked how much would insurance cost for this vehicle and the
14 Administrator said maybe \$500 per year. Ms. Houle asked how old the vehicle was, and Chief Buck
15 answered it was a 1986 vehicle, and it cost \$1,150 to transport it here. Ms. Houle asked if a purchase
16 order had been done in advance, and the Chief answered no but that was his mistake.

17
18 Chair Kart asked Ms. Houle to direct her questions to the Selectboard. Ms. Houle asked what
19 precedence did this set for advancing payment. Chief Buck said that his department would handle this
20 better in the future. Ms. Houle said that the Fire Department had asked for a boat and did not get it,
21 and Chair Kart said that the Fire Department did not ask for a boat, after all.

22
23 Mr. Filkorn said he shared Ms. Houle's concern, but also that the town has added a vehicle that was
24 not in the capital plan and the Selectboard did not approve of it ahead of time. He said that an open
25 public discussion was needed before these actions are taken. Ms. Houle thanked Mr. Filkorn for
26 saying that but said that if it had been her to say this she would have been criticized.

27 28 Discussion on Richmond Rescue Additional Funding

29
30 Mr. Boyden explained that last week a meeting with Richmond Rescue was held with representatives
31 from Richmond, Huntington and Bolton to discuss how to support a motion for increased funding.
32 Some conditions were presented to Richmond Rescue contingent to additional funding per a plan
33 developed by Rescue's Chief Ron Mack.

34
35 Mr. Granda, who was also present at that meeting, said that they had not received anything on the
36 request for a list of Richmond Rescue's board members. Mr. Boyden then recapped the meeting and
37 noted that there didn't appear to be anything on the list at the time that Richmond Rescue would not be
38 able to fulfill. The towns also requested representation on Richmond Rescue's board, and Chief Mack
39 said that would require a revision to the by-laws.

40
41 Ms. Houle asked if the information requested would also cover how officers were elected. Ms. Houle
42 suggested that they also get an audit. There was some discussion about the ability of Richmond
43 Rescue to procure an audit. They had an accountant for tax filing but this person did not conduct
44 audits.

45
46 Bruce Bailey asked what prevented the Selectboard from serving on Richmond Rescue's board and the
47 answer was they were not employees.

48
49 Clint Buxton asked if the advisory board had supported the proposal, as was stated in a recent mailing
50 by Richmond Rescue.

1
2 Mr. Boyden said that this was announced by Richmond Rescue prior to the advisory board announcing
3 it, or getting approval from the respective Selectboards.
4

5 Dennis Gile said that Richmond Rescue recently submitted to the town a financial report that showed
6 income from a large donation and wanted to know if the town knew anything about that. No one knew
7 the details of that donation.
8

9 Chair Kart asked if the Selectboard was going to support a motion to increase the budget. Mr. Granda
10 said he did not have adequate information yet. He asked if it would be possible to put an additional
11 amount into escrow. The Administrator said that the amount would not have to be automatically paid
12 over and could be held back.
13

14 Mr. Filkorn said that to make this less complicated the Selectboard should let the town decide how it
15 wants to handle this. The Administrator explained that the purpose of last week's meeting was to
16 determine how to support the additional funding that had been asked for by Chief Ron Mack. This had
17 been prepared over last Summer, however, the same questions were left unanswered now as were this
18 time last year. Thus, the conditions were presented to provide accountability and an explanation of
19 what Richmond Rescue's finances really were. A case had been made and it would be better to find a
20 way to support funding rather than to flatly deny it.
21

22 Chair Kart and Mr. Buxton discussed how to handle the discussion during the budget article. They
23 agreed that if conditions were to be placed on the funding then they would have to be listed during the
24 discussion.
25

26 Ms. Houle said she wanted to see Richmond Rescue thrive but not turn into another Solyndra (a
27 reference to a failed energy company that received a federally backed loan).
28

29 Chair Kart suggested that the letter of conditions and a summary of past meetings be brought up
30 during the discussion of the budget.
31

32 FY2013 Budget Discussion and Presentation 33

34 The Administrator gave a computerized presentation of the FY2013 Budget, meant for Town Meeting.
35 Also included were slides on the police vehicle issue and humvees as well as a recap of Tropical
36 Storm Irene damages and financial recovery. There was discussion on some modifications to the
37 presentation to make it clear to the public and how to best present information.
38

39 **3. Public Hearings and Comments on Ballot Articles 12 (PACE), 13 (Charter Amendment), 14** 40 **(Charter Amendment) and 15 (Citizens United decision)** 41

42 Chair Kart explained that the Selectboard had erroneously placed the Property Assessed Clean Energy
43 article and the Citizens United decision article as Australian Ballot. They had been improperly warned
44 and were likely to be invalid. There was discussion on whether or not these items could be brought up
45 from the floor. Mr. Buxton said that they could in fact be discussed but not amended. They could also
46 be brought up during Article 16 but they would be advisory. There was further discussion on this, and
47 all were unsure if they could be brought up under Article 16, or what the effect might have on the vote
48 on the warned articles. The two charter amendment articles were, by state law, Australian Ballot items
49 and appear to have been warned properly and with no other issues.
50

1 Chair Kart also mentioned that the Selectboard had sent a letter to all residents urging them to approve
2 these articles, and that letter should not have been sent. Chair Kart asked if there were any comments
3 from the public or from the Selectboard on any of the Australian Ballot items, and there being none
4 Chair Kart closed the public comments.

5 6 **4. Other Business**

7 8 FEMA DFIRM Appeal

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10 The Administrator explained that at the end of the month he was planning to hold a special meeting
11 regarding the appeal of the new base flood elevation of the Winooski River, and FEMA's DFIRMs.
12 He said that while working with Cara LaBounty she had urged that there was no other choice than to
13 appeal, and the Selectboard's actions so far were leading people to believe there would be an appeal.
14 The Administrator said that there was little time to prepare and asked the Selectboard if they wanted to
15 agree to an appeal now, or prepare for one.

16
17 Ms. Houle said that there had been no legal costs to other towns who had done this.

18
19 There were some questions and answers regarding timing and the viability of an appeal between the
20 Selectboard and the Administrator. Mr. Filkorn said he would need to see a cost-benefit analysis, but
21 if it was free to file the appeal then the town should go for it.

22
23 Ms. Houle said that if you have proof that the base flood elevation was wrong then they had a duty to
24 challenge the DFIRM.

25
26 Mr. Boyden agreed but asked that if it turned out to be long and costly, what would we win.

27
28 Mr. Granda asked if this could be talked about in the context of Town Meeting.

29
30 The Administrator said that he would proceed with preparing for an appeal, and if he ran into a
31 significant barrier, such as cost, he would come back to the board for approval. The Selectboard
32 consented to this action.

33 34 Parade & Fireworks Committee Coin-Drop

35
36 The Administrator said that the Parade & Firework Committee had requested a coin drop. The
37 Selectboard agreed, and Ms. Heston offered a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Granda.
38 Ms. Heston suggested that the current policy could be expanded, but still limited to Richmond
39 nonprofit organizations. The motion to approve carried 5-0.

40 41 Discussion of Signs on Town Center property

42
43 The Administrator explained that someone had placed a sign regarding one of the articles near the flag
44 pole at Town Center. Several people had thought that there was a policy against this, but there was
45 not. Linda Parent had removed the sign because she said it was in front of a polling place. The
46 Administrator asked if the Selectboard wanted to develop a policy, or allow the placement of signs.

47
48 There was some discussion and the Selectboard agreed that they wished to regulate the placement of
49 signs, including political signs, on property owned by the town. The Administrator was directed to
50 develop such a policy for their review.

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2
3 Approval of Notes for 2011 Highway Truck, 2012 Highway Truck and 2011 Fire Truck
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5 The Administrator explained that the one-year note from Merchants Bank for the 2011 Highway Truck
6 and 2011 Fire Truck were due, and a new note was needed for the 2012 Highway Truck. Merchants
7 Bank had provided two quotes for each, a one-year note and a four-year note for the 2011 equipment
8 and a five year note for the 2012 equipment. The Administrator said that while the one-year interest
9 rate was lower, the four and five year interest rates at 2.32% were only .6% more and over the term
10 were likely to be cost effective, and easier to plan from a budgetary standpoint.
11

12 Mr. Boyden offered a motion to authorize the signing of a five year note from Merchants Bank in the
13 amount of \$112,187 at a fixed interest rate of 2.32%, and a four year note from Merchants Bank in the
14 amount of \$311,880 at a fixed interest rate of 2.32% and was seconded by Mr. Filkorn and the motion
15 carried 5-0.
16

17 Approval of Minutes of February 21, 2012
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19 Mr. Filkorn offered a motion to approve the minutes of February 21, 2012 with a minor edit to those
20 present and was seconded by Mr. Boyden and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Granda abstaining.
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22 Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2012
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24 Mr. Boyden offered a motion to approve the minutes of February 27, 2012 and was seconded by Mr.
25 Filkorn and the motion carried 5-0.
26

27 **5. Administrator's Reports**
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29 The Administrator had no additional report.
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31 Chair Kart asked how the Selectboard wanted to field questions at Town Meeting on the various
32 articles. It was agreed that Chair Kart would explain the mailing issue and the Property Assessed
33 Clean Energy (PACE Article 12), and Richmond Rescue would be handled by Mr. Boyden, Mr.
34 Granda and Ms. Heston. Mr. Buxton said that may come up under Article 11.
35

36 Chair Kart added that Chief Buck would be present for any humvee discussion, as part of the budget
37 discussion.
38

39 **6. Adjourn**

40 Motion by Mr. Filkorn to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Heston. So voted.