

**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  
O c t o b e r 7 , 2 0 1 3   M I N U T E S**

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Members Present: Amy Lord, Vice Chair; Chris Granda; Ashley Lucht; Taylor Yeates  
 Absent: June Heston  
 Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Barb Willis; Bruce LaBounty; Tim Eustace; Cathleen Gent, Town Planner; Mary Houle; Ann Cousins; Brad Worthen; Mike Donohue and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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Amy Lord called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**1. Welcome and Public Comment**

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

Gary Bressor spoke about a movement to go to interim zoning for the creamery parcel. Ms. Lord said that the Economic Development Committee and others were exploring this. Mr. Bressor said that the people needed to have a say in this, and he had concerns about increasing density on this parcel. He said that doing this would just increase the asking price for the owner. He felt that the town needed to think about what it wanted to see here. He said we should talk to Mike Como, and he was a successful developer who needed a store that was substantially larger.

Ms. Lord explained the discussions from the Richmond Economic Development Committee's meeting from October 3rd. They had discussed a variety of issues, including how to modify zoning to make the parcel more marketable, not for the owner's sake, but for a redevelopment plan.

Mr. Granda asked the intent for interim zoning. He asked what tended to happen under interim zoning, and would this allow a greater flexibility to develop or allow the property to be configured in the most profitable way.

Bruce LaBounty said that he was also on this committee and with interim zoning the town can solve some issues but if the property still wouldn't sell then it is because the asking price is too high, not the zoning. The Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation felt that zoning was too restrictive but they may help under interim zoning. Dan Noyes was reluctant primarily because of the cleanup costs on top of the asking price.

Mr. Bressor added that interim zoning was not left up to the people.

Brad Worthen said he agreed with Gary. he studied this parcel as an investment. Mr. Worthen owned a real estate company. He said he looked at the cleanup costs and other things. The site was a mess, and said that the owner really bought a liability at a cheap price and the cleanup wasn't less than \$400,000. He urged the Selectboard to not get behind the needs of the current owner.

Mr. LaBounty said that one of the biggest things was the need for an outside group to help with grants to assist in the cleanup.

Denise Curley spoke about the outstanding property complaint she talked about last month. She said that the Notice of Violation that was supposed to be issued on September 3rd was not issued until

1 September 24th. The notice issued did not provide a specific date in which the violation needed to be  
2 fixed. She wanted to know why this was still not corrected. There was some discussion on this issue.  
3

4 Ms. Curley said she was the victim, and said that Mr. O'Brien promised in July to move the structures,  
5 but had not done so. Her objective was to get compliance and that the town has fines as tools. There  
6 was additional discussion. The Selectboard agreed that Mr. O'Brien should face fines for the  
7 continuing violation, and this needed to be scheduled for October 21st.  
8

## 9 **2. Items for Discussion with Those Present**

### 10 Richmond Holiday Market Request

11 Barbara Willis asked permission to use the Town Center building for the annual Holiday Market, on  
12 December 7th. She also asked to have the same wine vendor as last year, and there were no  
13 complaints to her knowledge. The local winery that was doing business at the farmers market was the  
14 one that would be at the holiday market.  
15  
16

17 Ms. Lucht said she saw no issues doing this, and offered a motion to approve the request to allow  
18 Town Center to be used for the Holiday Market, and allow the wine vendor. Mr. Granda seconded the  
19 motion and the motion carried 4-0.  
20

21 Ms. Houle asked if only a single vendor was allowed, and added that all licenses should be in place.  
22 Ms. Willis acknowledged that a proper license would be necessary.  
23  
24

### 25 Interviews for Development Review Board

26 Brad Worthen was the first interview. Mr. Worthen said he was asked to apply by the outgoing  
27 member of the DRB. He had served on previous committees such as the committee to interview the  
28 new Town Administrator, the governance committee, and others. He had led commercial groups in  
29 Chittenden County and was owner of a real estate development firm. He had developed here in  
30 Richmond, and outside of homes there he had no other plans to develop in Richmond. If there was  
31 ever a conflict, he would recuse himself from those discussions.  
32  
33

34 Ms. Lord asked what the biggest challenges and opportunities might be. Mr. Worthen said that  
35 commercial space is limited here in Richmond and was valuable. He spoke of the creamery site, and  
36 said that you have to be careful with interim zoning, because how could you turn down a conforming  
37 application even if it did not meet your plans.  
38

39 The Selectboard discussed Mr. Worthen's background, and thanked him for his interest.  
40

41 Mike Donohue introduced himself. He had been a Richmond resident since 1999 and was a  
42 homeowner but not a developer. He had some familiarity with the DRB but had no experience on  
43 other committees. He had owned his own business in Burlington since 1995 and thought this would  
44 be a good way to give back.  
45

46 Ms. Lucht asked if he had any plans to develop any property in Richmond. Mr. Donohue said none,  
47 he just owned his home.  
48

49 Mr. Granda thanked Mr. Donohue for his interest, and asked if he had ever attended DRB meetings.  
50 Mr. Donohue said that he had attended the zoning regulations hearings. He said we need to improve

1 the way we approach people, identify where the hangups were and how to improve and not be  
2 confrontational.

3  
4 Ms. Lord asked what he saw as the main challenges. Mr. Donohue said that some things were going  
5 right and Richmond was a desirable place to live but we needed more retail options.

6  
7 Ms. Lucht asked if we had any opinion from the chair, such as what we had with the Planning  
8 Commission. The Manager said that the chair of the Planning Commission had said that he had  
9 approved of any of the candidates and did not recommend any particular one. There had been no other  
10 interest.

11  
12 Cathleen Gent, Town Planner, said that the Selectboard could also establish a higher number of  
13 members for the DRB, as they had with the Planning Commission. She said that with five members, it  
14 was difficult to have a quorum with absences. The Manager added that with additional members, the  
15 quorum would increase from three to four. There was discussion. Mr. Yeates suggested that we add a  
16 second alternate to the DRB.

17  
18 Mr. Granda agreed that there was value to having a second alternate. The Selectboard could appoint  
19 one candidate to the board and one to the alternate slot.

20  
21 Ms. Lucht said she wanted to see new volunteers on our boards. Mr. Granda agreed, but didn't want to  
22 not put someone like Mr. Worthen on.

23  
24 Ms. Lord said that we had two really good candidates and it was nice to see that Mr. Donohue wanted  
25 to volunteer.

26  
27 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to appoint Mr. Donohue to the DRB and was seconded by Mr. Yeates, and  
28 the motion carried 4-0.

29  
30 Mr. Granda offered a motion to add a second alternate position to the DRB and was seconded by Mr.  
31 Yeates. The motion carried 4-0.

32  
33 Ms. Lucht asked Mr. Worthen if he would be willing to serve as the second alternate, and he answered  
34 yes. Mr. Granda offered a motion to appoint Mr. Worthen to the second alternate seat on the DRB and  
35 was seconded by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0.

### 37 **3. Other Business**

#### 38 39 **Discussion on 266 Bridge Street Access**

40  
41 The Manager explained that this issue had been carried from the last meeting. The access application  
42 was related to the DRB approval for certain changes at this parcel going from a residential use to a  
43 commercial use. The Selectboard had questions regarding proper width of driveways, the access, and  
44 the fact that there were two accesses in existence. Cathleen Gent had prepared a memo to explain the  
45 DRB approval for the narrow driveway widths and there was a report from the Highway Foreman,  
46 Peter Gosselin saying that the driveway aprons could be 20 feet and twelve feet, respectively. The  
47 Manager further explained that the aprons might be that width but the driveways themselves were  
48 obviously not. The DRB had allowed the more narrow driveways while placing the highway access  
49 issue to the Selectboard. The aprons could be proper width, 20 feet for the commercial access and  
50 twelve feet for the residential access.

1  
2 Mr. Yeates said that the Selectboard was told that there was a problem with widths, but never that the  
3 DRB had approved these more narrow widths. There was some discussion on this issue.

4  
5 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the access permit #13-070 and was seconded by Mr. Granda.

6  
7 Mary Houle asked if two driveways were allowed.

8  
9 Cathleen Gent said that the by-laws do allow two driveways, but this was pre-existing for quite a  
10 while.

11  
12 Mary Houle asked if there were any sideline issues (meaning side yard setbacks). Ms. Gent again said  
13 that this was a pre-existing driveway, and the setbacks would not apply in this case.

14  
15 Bruce LaBounty said he meant no offense to the DRB but waiving the widths for the driveways in a  
16 commercial area was not a good idea. The regulations were there for a reason.

17  
18 After additional discussion, Mr. Yeates moved to call the question. The motion carried 4-0.

19  
20 Ms. Gent asked to explain that the Farr access permit 13-111 listed on the Consent Agenda was for a  
21 final subdivision. This access was for a home behind the barn on Huntington Road.

#### 22 23 Bank Notes for Highway Loader and Depot Street

24  
25 The Manager reported that the town had solicited quotes for bank notes for the new Highway Loader  
26 and the approved Depot Street project. The loader was for \$45,000 over two years and the Depot  
27 Street parking lot was for \$80,000 for four years. Three banks were contacted, Merchants, Peoples  
28 United and TD Bank. Only Merchants responded with a bid, and TD responded that they were not  
29 interested in bidding. The interest rates for the loader were 1.69% and for Depot Street was 2%.

30  
31 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve a bank note from Merchants Bank for purchase of a Highway  
32 Loader in the amount of \$45,000, payable over two years at 1.69% interest. Mr. Granda seconded the  
33 motion and the motion carried 4-0.

34  
35 Mr. Granda offered a motion to approve a bank note from Merchants Bank for purchase of the Depot  
36 Street parking lot in the amount of \$80,000 payable over four years at 2% interest. Mr. Yeates  
37 seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

#### 38 39 Peet Subdivision Trail

40  
41 Ms. Lord explained that at the last meeting this item was discussed, and one resident did show up after  
42 the discussion. The Selectboard had decided to wait and see if any other residents in the area were  
43 willing to comment on the proposed trail.

44  
45 The Manager added that there seemed to be no compelling reasons for or against accepting the trail  
46 easement.

47  
48 Mr. Yeates said that we should take the easement now even if we have no immediate plans to build the  
49 trail. In twenty years it might be a good idea. If not, then it could be given up.

50

1 Ms. Lucht said it was a good thing that these two neighborhoods could have a common access  
2 between them.

3  
4 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to accept the trail easement from the Peet subdivision and was seconded  
5 by Mr. Granda, and the motion carried 4-0.

### 6 Healthcare Discussion

7  
8  
9 The Manager explained the healthcare analysis.

10  
11 The healthcare issue is probably the most complex and easily misunderstood issue that we face this  
12 year. The federal Affordable Care Act has allowed the creation of health exchanges that offer a  
13 variety of health plans that cover the same essential benefits but divide full plan costs in different  
14 ways. Vermont has embraced this change and has developed their exchange and two carriers are  
15 participating: Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Mohawk Valley Plan (MVP). The exchanges open on  
16 October 1<sup>st</sup> and enrollment has to be completed by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

17  
18 We have already had a brief introduction to the issue several months ago, so I will avoid lengthy  
19 discussion of how the exchange will work, what's covered, who is in the exchange now, who waits,  
20 etc. Instead, we'll skip to the chase, and I can answer questions as you ask them. To start off:

- 21  
22
- Employers must choose to participate in healthcare, and how, during October 2013
  - The Selectboard's focus should be on funding employee healthcare at a particular level; there is no town sponsored plan and employees are free to choose whichever plan they wish but the town will only pay UP TO the policy that is decided upon
  - Most plans have a separate (non-integrated) Prescription (Rx) and Medical deductible which is different than what we have now, and complicates the comparisons
  - Our employee group has chosen to focus on plans with cost structures substantially similar to our existing plan
  - Our employee group has chosen to compare based on our existing funding policy of 100% premium paid by the employer and a 70%/30% split of the deductible
  - Our employee group has dismissed non-standard plans and MVP offerings
  - A complete understanding of the differences between plans will take hours and in the end makes little difference because the employer policy can change to accommodate any cost sharing scenario; what matters is comfort level
  - No one can predict how well this will work and we cannot dwell on questions we cannot answer nor on questions of minute differences between plans
  - Keep in mind that future rate increases are based on premiums, not deductibles
  - The town may save money by paying higher premium but less deductible
- 23  
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40

41 Please see the attached sheets, which abridge the choices into basic employer/employee costs. This is  
42 in no way representative of all situations. For more details on the Out of Pocket Maximums (OOPM)  
43 you will need to refer to Vermont's Health Connect summary sheet (also an attachment). What we're  
44 presenting is a very basic analysis of what we could expect to pay next year given any of four plan  
45 "finalists" and what our employees might pay. Again, individual situations may vary and employees  
46 are free to choose other plans not shown.

### 47 BCBS Standard Silver Plan

48  
49

1 This plan is on the low end of our choice selection. It is similar in structure to what we have now,  
2 however, the Rx deductible and Medical deductible are not integrated (meaning they are two separate  
3 deductibles) and as with all standard plans, the deductibles are “stacked” meaning that separate  
4 individuals on a family plan meet separate deductibles (up to OOPM). This means that employee  
5 exposure is much higher than it is now. Also, with the standard plans in our choice presentation, the  
6 Health Savings Account is NOT an option and the employer will set up a Health Reimbursement  
7 Account. The HRA will require a third party administrator, but may result in potential deductible  
8 contribution savings. You still have to budget for the full amount (according to policy), though.

### 9 10 **BCBS HDHP Silver Plan**

11  
12 This plan is in most ways similar to our plan. The OOPM for employees is much higher, but the Rx  
13 deductible is integrated with the Medical deductible, meaning that they both count towards the same  
14 number. The deductibles are also aggregated (biggest selling point), meaning that all people on the  
15 plan are qualified to meet the family deductible. This is also the lowest premium of our choices. This  
16 plan is also qualified for a Health Savings Account.

### 17 18 **BCBS Standard Gold Plan**

19  
20 Don't be scared by the name, the value in this plan is the fact that the deductibles are much lower,  
21 which saves big on our 70/30 cost share. The premiums are higher than the Silver plans, but the  
22 deductible savings have potential. I would recommend the Selectboard consider dropping the  
23 deductible funding entirely with this plan and the costs (and share) become comparable to the HDHP  
24 Silver plan, with a lower OOPM exposure to employees. Would have an HRA if we continue to fund  
25 the deductible.

### 26 27 **BCBS Standard Platinum Plan**

28  
29 This is like the Gold, only richer. Bear with me, the premiums are higher but the OOPM for  
30 employees are minimal and you get out of the deductible business. This is the richest plan offering but  
31 many towns are considering it because of labor contracts. Some employees thought you might like to  
32 look at it. If you consider it, consider dropping deductibles entirely, and having employees pay for a  
33 percentage of premium.

34  
35  
36 Those are the plans, in a nutshell. The “coverage” is the same; just don't confuse “insurer-paid” with  
37 coverage. The insured must now pay a significant amount first – which is where we divvy up the  
38 deductibles between employer and employee – but the fact is that the initial costs are the responsibility  
39 of the insured. Our policy is open for amendment, or we may keep it roughly the same for the first  
40 year.

41  
42 Mr. Yeates said he felt that the Standard Silver plan was out, and the High Deductible Silver Plan was  
43 unacceptable in that it increased out of pocket costs substantially to the employees. Mr. Yeates  
44 suggested that the Standard Gold plan might be workable.

45  
46 There was additional discussion. The Manager noted that the decision on employer funding needed to  
47 be made by the end of the month, and a decision was expected at the October 21st meeting.

48  
49  
50

## Budget Discussions

The Manager presented the first draft of the budget, with highlights of expenses in each department. This is a rough first cut, and does not include a final approval of capital items, which are listed separately in the Capital Plan. This includes a 2% cost of living adjustment on salaries, with additional personnel changes. The Health Insurance lines are not final until the Selectboard chooses a funding policy. Some capital items have been included, and will be noted, and most water budgets have increased.

At a glance, here are the major changes by Department:

### Administration

There are no significant initiatives for the Administration Department in FY15. Salaries may increase above 2% due to future personnel changes which may be necessary but won't affect any major restructuring of the department.

Heat will decrease due to our change to efficient gas boilers. Likewise, our use of town center rental funds to offset some of these costs will also be reduced.

Trash removal has increased significantly. We may explore an alternate hauler to reduce costs.

Insurance is increasing. This will also lead to an increase in the same line for the Water Resources budget.

### Listers

The listers have not yet presented a request, so I have carried over their current year budget numbers. On October 21<sup>st</sup> the Selectboard will hear a proposal and counter proposal on the future of elected listers, which may have an effect on the budget.

### Planning and Zoning

We hired our current zoning officer at a higher rate than previous, which is why salaries are above 2%.

Training has been increased, and there is \$3,000 to purchase a permit tracking software package.

### Police Department

Due to turnover, salaries remain below a 2% increase.

Uniform costs have increased, and with high turnover we have to purchase more uniforms.

The major computer upgrades are winding down, and costs will decrease.

Police Supplies are also increasing due to high use of supplies.

Gasoline is expected to remain high, and this line is marked up accordingly.

1 The most significant increase is in the Police Cruiser line. The less expensive cruisers we've been  
2 purchasing are no longer available as a police model. The available cruisers are the Ford Taurus,  
3 Chevrolet Caprice, Dodge Charger and a variety of SUVs which cost \$30,000 plus outfitting costs.  
4 This line includes \$31,000 for purchase and outfit, plus \$10,000 for the final year of a three year lease.  
5

### 6 **Library Department**

7  
8 The salaries are increasing due to a reclassification of one employee.  
9

10 The overall department budget is down. This includes going back to an \$8,000 reserve contribution. I  
11 believe we may want to reconsider this if the remaining budget allows.  
12

### 13 **Fire Department**

14  
15 The department is adding two lines for pump and hose testing, which are reasonable costs. There is  
16 little variation in the operations lines.  
17

18 The big nut is going to be a request to replace their oldest fire truck, at a cost of between \$350,000 and  
19 \$400,000. Chief Levesque will need to develop a plan to pay for this item. In 2010, he had a  
20 wonderful plan to pay for almost 1/3 of the truck with reserves and a one-time cash item of about  
21 \$20,000. The good news is, that soon the previous fire truck will be paid for and the air packs will be  
22 fully replaced and capital items will be limited to just this truck for a few years.  
23

### 24 **Recreation**

25  
26 There are no significant changes to the recreation budget at this time. The extra funds required for  
27 roofing are no longer needed. However, Volunteers Green could use some baseball field work. I am  
28 not sure if the Little League has any plans.  
29

### 30 **Appropriations**

31  
32 I have largely carried over last year's costs. I do not yet have requests from these agencies, so expect  
33 most lines to change as those requests trickle in.  
34

### 35 **Highway Budget**

36  
37 Salaries are up, including Auxiliary help. No one is expected to receive more than the standard cost of  
38 living.  
39

40 Diesel Fuel is increased due to anticipated costs and usage.  
41

42 The Salt budget has increased slightly to reflect higher salt costs.  
43

44 The two road items of Retreatment (paving) and Gravel have increased again according to the capital  
45 plan. Combined, this increase represents \$34,000.  
46

47 Storm drain work has increased also to reflect additional work required. We should also have our  
48 shared Jet/Vac ready for next year.  
49

1 The new capital item is the FY15 tandem dump truck, with a \$25,000 downpayment. This, coupled  
2 with trade in value of our old truck, should yield an additional five years of \$25,000 to purchase.  
3 These trucks run from \$150,000 to \$180,000 each.

4  
5 Virtually all other capital items remain unchanged.

6  
7 The Manager said that he would have Department Heads come to the Selectboard to explain their  
8 requests.

9  
10 Ms. Lucht asked if the Town Center revenue could be used to fund the website. There was additional  
11 discussion on the website. It was agreed that this would be discussed again on the November 4th  
12 meeting.

### 13 14 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

#### 15 16 Economic Development

17  
18 Ms. Lord reported that on October 3rd the Richmond Economic Development Committee had met  
19 with other town officials to discuss the creamery parcel and interim zoning. Heidi Bormann had  
20 announced her resignation due to some other conflicts, and she thanked Ms. Bormann for her  
21 leadership over the past year. The ground breaking for the Depot Street project had been held also.

22  
23 The Manager updated everyone on Depot Street, and the water line was being installed now. The  
24 entire project was expected to be complete by the first week of November. The Manager also updated  
25 the Selectboard on several significant projects, including the Park and Ride expansion, Bridge Street  
26 paving, and the Checkered House Bridge project was complete.

#### 27 28 Approval of Warrants

29  
30 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the warrants and was seconded by Mr. Granda. The motion  
31 carried 4-0.

#### 32 33 Approval of Minutes of September 16, 2013

34  
35 Mr. Granda offered a motion to approve the minutes of September 16, 2013 as amended with minor  
36 edits and was seconded by Mr. Yeates. The motion carried 3-0-1 with Ms. Lucht abstaining.

#### 37 38 Approval of Minutes of September 23, 2013

39  
40 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2013 and was seconded by Mr.  
41 Yeates and the motion carried 3-0-1 with Mr. Granda abstaining.

42  
43 Bruce LaBounty spoke of additional cell towers coming into town, and the Planning Commission had  
44 been holding hearings.

#### 45 46 Consent Agenda

47  
48 The Manager explained that the items were a request to hold the annual Turkey Trot race on Cochran  
49 Road by the "Never Give Up, Ever" organization that had succeeded the "Jared's Run" organization.  
50 The race was for November 28th at 8am.

- 1  
2 The second item was the access permit #13-111 for 400 Huntington Road and the third item was the  
3 Corporal job description that was developed in accordance with the new advancement plan in the  
4 Police Department.  
5  
6 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and was seconded by Mr. Granda and the  
7 motion carried 4-0.  
8  
9 **4. Adjourn**  
10 Motion by Ms. Lucht to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Granda. So voted.