

**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
A p r i l 6 , 2 0 1 5 M I N U T E S**

Members Present: David Sander; Ellen Kane; Bard Hill; ; Taylor Yeates; Lincoln Bressor
 Absent: None
 Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; Pete Pochop, Green Mountain Engineering; Ian Bender; Harold Irish; Joyce Wannamaker; Rod West; Gary Bressor; Christy Witters; Heidi Bormann; Peter Gosselin, Highway Foreman; Alan Buck, Chief of Police; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape and live-stream the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

David Sander called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Yeates asked if there was any comment from the public for items not on the agenda, but there were none.

2. Items for Discussion with Those Present

Highway Summer Work Plan

Peter Gosselin was present to explain his plans for the Summer work program for the Highway Department. Mr. Gosselin’s department would begin their 10 hour days in late April and continue until mid-October. The schedule included gravel work on Johnny Brook Road, Hillview and Wortheim Road; paving on Jericho Road; replacement of the culvert on Huntington Road at Farr’s corner as well as roadside mowing and other grounds keeping duties.

Mary Houle asked how many full and part time employees the Highway Department had and Mr. Gosselin reported he had four full time operators and one 24 hour per week position and one 10 hour per week position. The Selectboard thanked Mr. Gosselin for his presentation.

Crime Statistics

Chief of Police Alan Buck was present to go over some crime statistics, particularly with burglaries in town that tend to get reported by the public over Front Porch Forum leading to some misunderstanding as to the number and location of these incidents. Chief Buck said that a summary of all incidents was reported in the annual Town Report and the public could find prior years’ statistics there. He also prepared a bi-weekly report for the Selectboard that summarized activity including crime statistics and some narrative to notable incidents.

Chief Buck said that some people may start to believe that Richmond was having a high incidence of burglaries but that wasn’t the case. Recently we have had some, about 4, but last year the town had 8 burglaries and they had made three arrests and in on case the victim did not want to press charges because they believed the perpetrator was working through some difficult issues. He said there was a 12.7% solution rate for burglaries nationally, and he and his officers put in quite a bit of time to solve

1 the cases locally and they were well above 12.7%. Chief Buck mentioned that it was taking so much
2 time in fact he had proposed the part-time detective to relieve the officers of the labor-intensive follow
3 up which often meant travelling out of town to investigate pawn shops and work with other agencies.
4

5 Mr. Yeates asked if we covered Bolton and Huntington if that would help in understanding a regional
6 response. Chief Buck said no, the real burden was the time commitment for solving cases. Chiefs and
7 the State Police talk about these incidents and communicate online which is very good, however, the
8 ability to follow up is limiting.
9

10 There was some discussion on how to communicate better with the public. The Chief suggested his
11 activity reports could go on the Police webpage. There was some other discussion about Front Porch
12 Forum and media but solutions would take time to develop. The Selectboard thanked Chief Buck for
13 his time.
14

15 **3. Public Hearings & Ordinances for Second Reading**

16 Animal Control Ordinance

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18

19 The Manager explained that this ordinance would replace the existing animal control ordinance, and
20 this was the model VLCT ordinance modified to fit Richmond's needs. The Manager also explained
21 that there was a particular modification that allowed the Selectboard to enforce penalties if a dog bite
22 occurred on the premises of the owner, where currently law allows for penalties only if the dog was
23 not on the premises of the owner.
24

25 Mr. Yeates said he was not interested in adjudicating cases where it occurred on the owners property.
26 Mr. Hill agreed, and said that he didn't also believe that euthanizing the dog should be a penalty
27 option. Mr. Yeates said that the Police Department should be directed to investigate, not the
28 Selectboard. The Selectboard discussed why this was presented in this way and the Manager said that
29 this was the original request by the Health Officer, Wright Preston.
30

31 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to open the public hearing for Ordinance 2015-02 Animal Control and
32 was seconded by Mr. Hill.
33

34 There being no public comment, Mr. Hill offered a motion to continue the public hearing on April 20th
35 at 7:30 in Town Center with Mr. Preston present if possible. The motion carried 4-0.
36

37 Mr. Hill briefly left the room.
38

39 Fee Ordinance

40

41 The Manager explained that this altered the fees for land development permits and applications,
42 including removing the fees for school impact fees and rewriting the technical review fee section.
43

44 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to open the public hearing on the Fee Ordinance and was seconded by
45 Mr. Sander and the motion carried 4-0.
46

47 The Manager read through the changes. Mr. Hill returned to the meeting. Seeing no public comment,
48 Mr. Hill offered a motion to close the public hearing and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion
49 carried 5-0.
50

1 Ms. Kane offered a motion to adopt the changes to the Fee Ordinance and was seconded by Mr.
2 Sander and the motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Yeates voting against.

3
4 Mr. Sander asked if Mr. Yeates would be willing to explain his vote, and Mr. Yeates said it was short
5 sighted to eliminate the school impact fee, and the technical review fees were arbitrary would have
6 negative effects.

7 8 **4. Other Business**

9 10 West Main Cost Share Request

11
12 Mr. Hill explained that the Water Commission had considered that they had spent almost \$40,000 so
13 far on engineering and attorneys fees to scope the project and begin negotiations to extend water and
14 sewer lines to the mobile home park. They also considered that there was some risk that the extension
15 might not be built or an agreement with the mobile home park not reached. In any case, the Water
16 Commission also recognized that part of the benefit of the proposed lines was economic development
17 that was shared across the entire town. The Water Commission, therefore, would like the Selectboard
18 to, at some point, consider sharing in the overall costs in getting to that point, if the project did not
19 succeed.

20
21 Mr. Sander said this was not a formal request to decide this issue today, but rather consider it and
22 possibly take action at a later time.

23
24 Mr. Yeates asked why should the town pay \$1,000 for the access road (as part of the scoping study)
25 when it benefited the schools? This wouldn't support the town, there was no budget for it and it was
26 inappropriate for the Water Commission to ask the town to support this study.

27
28 Mr. Bressor said if these types of deals happen then we needed to talk about this before we start
29 spending money. Mr. Hill said this was still hypothetical. Mr. Yeates said they don't get a bailout,
30 they have to make it happen. Mr. Hill said this would be tabled until it needed to be addressed again.

31 32 Green Mountain Engineering Contract & Planning Loans

33
34 Peter Pochop of Green Mountain Engineering was present to explain the scope of the engineering
35 contract for the preliminary design of the West Main Utility Extension and the planning loan
36 applications for paying for this work. Mr. Pochop explained that the Water Commission had already
37 approved this contract, but he wanted the Selectboard to ratify it as well. The planning loans were
38 Clean Water for \$10,425 and Drinking Water for \$72,598.

39
40 Mr. Yeates said he was hesitant to do this because the Water Commission will expect the town to pay
41 for this. After some discussion and consideration, Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the contract
42 with Green Mountain Engineering for preliminary design of the West Main Utility Extension in the
43 amount of \$149,146.00 and authorize the applications to the State CWSRF and DWSRF programs.
44 Mr. Sander seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

45 46 Vermont Municipal Bond Bank Documents

47
48 The Manager presented the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank documents for the -.7% interest loan for
49 the Water Storage Tank and the Chlorine Contact project. These were amended from the prior

1 meeting. Mr. Bressor noted that the amount on page 1 was still misprinted, and would need to be
2 corrected. The amount was doublechecked and agreed to be amended.

3
4 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the Resolution and Certificate, and authorize the signing of
5 additional required paperwork for the loan for the Water Storage Tank and Chlorine project through
6 the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank at \$1,172,989.16 at a -0.7% interest rate, over 30 years. Mr. Hill
7 seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

8 9 Local Emergency Operations Plan

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11 The Manager explained that this document was required to be updated and approved each year. This
12 was primarily a contact sheet with certain forms that would be used to document an emergency and
13 who was contacted and what actions were taken, plus a few appendices.

14
15 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the Local Emergency Operations Plan and was seconded by
16 Ms. Kane and the motion carried 5-0.

17 18 Assessor Contract – First Year Review

19
20 The Manger explained that at last year's Town Meeting the voters approved a plan to move from
21 elected listers to appointed assessors. The Selectboard issued an RFP and awarded a contract to
22 NEMRC for assessing services. This was a one-year contract and was up for renewal, or the town
23 could seek another agency. The Manager said that NEMRC's representative, Ed Clodfelter, couldn't
24 be here tonight but that he was soliciting feedback on the first year of their services. The Manager
25 said he felt they had performed well and handled any complaints he had received.

26
27 Mr. Yeates asked why this wasn't bid out. The Manager said professional services didn't always get
28 bid out, especially in anticipation of a renewal.

29
30 Mr. Hill asked how typically performance was measured for this. The Manager said it wasn't easy but
31 several factors such as the number of appeals, the health of the Grand List and getting everything
32 listed that was provided to them. The Manager said while appeals were low last year, it was their first
33 year and their listing wasn't all done by them. Complaints were few that the Manager knew of, and
34 building permits weren't currently reconciled with the Grand List.

35
36 Mr. Yeates said he would like to know from Mr. Clodfelter more about the multi-year townwide
37 assessment; sustainability of the NEMRC assessor services; and should we or shouldn't we revalue?
38 There was some discussion on the last point. The Manager pointed out in Mr. Clodfelter's recent
39 correspondence that the CLA was over 90% and the COD was low, so there was no immediate need
40 for a reassessment.

41
42 Mary Houle agreed that the CLA was the main driver of a reassessment. There was some discussion,
43 but confirmed this would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

44 45 Update on Creamery

46
47 The Manager reported few details, but all he could, on the creamery. He identified the potential buyer
48 as Gristmill Builders, from Stowe. They had signed a purchase and sales agreement but the deal was
49 not finalized and being considered. They had inquired of the town's willingness to pursue Vermont
50 Community Development Block Grant funds for assisting in demolition and he said that the town was

1 ready to assist. By and large this was still a private arrangement and the town would be updated as the
2 two parties saw fit.

3 4 Tree Grant

5
6 The Manager explained that the town wished to pursue a Vermont Community & Urban Forestry
7 program grant to replace four trees: three on West Main Street and one at Town Center. The total cost
8 was expected to be around \$2,000 for the work and the grant was for \$1,000 of that.

9
10 Mr. Yeates asked how this match would be paid for, and the Manager explained that the budget had
11 \$2,000 for landscaping. Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the application to the Vermont
12 Community and Urban Forestry program for a grant to replace trees and was seconded by Ms. Kane.
13 The motion carried 5-0.

14 15 Appointments Preview

16
17 The Manager explained that this was the final preview before the final appointments would be made at
18 the April 20th meeting. In particular, the Selectboard had a policy that they would interview new
19 candidates for the Development Review Board and the Planning Commission. Other appointments
20 could be made without interviews.

21
22 There was some discussion about how to choose between candidates on those boards, without
23 interviews. The Selectboard agreed to request letters of interest detailing their plans and goals, with
24 experience. The Selectboard also requested that one more solicitation of interest for boards with
25 vacancies be issued to Front Porch Forum and interviews for the DRB and Planning Commission be
26 established at the April 20th meeting.

27 28 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

29
30 The Manager quickly reported that traffic this Summer would be an issue, with the projects in
31 Waterbury shutting down the Interstate periodically. The State had given the town permission to
32 direct traffic during those times, at the four-corners intersection. The Selectboard discussed this and
33 requested that the Manager seek funding from the State to make this happen. The Manager also said
34 that the new water storage tank would be built on Jericho Road, making that road one-lane at
35 Southview Drive for several months. Additionally, the culvert on Huntington Road at Farr's curve
36 would be replaced, also leading to traffic backups.

37
38 The Manager reported on the recent Leahy Environmental Summit participation and the upcoming
39 Community Resilience Organization training in May. Lastly, the Manager reported that the zoning
40 officer, Neal Leitner, was leaving in June and Police Officer Richard Greenough was promoted to
41 Corporal. There was some discussion about Cpl. Greenough and his part-time status. The Manager
42 explained that the State had re-written the rules around part-time officers, and now there was nothing
43 prohibiting Mr. Greenough's work as a part timer except what was now in the new rules.

44 45 Approval of Minutes

46
47 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the minutes of March 9, 2015 and was seconded by Ms. Kane.
48 The motion carried 5-0.

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1 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the minutes of March 16, 2015 and was seconded by Ms.
2 Kane. The motion carried 5-0.

3

4 GMAA Round Church Run

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6 The Manager explained that the Green Mountain Athletic Association had requested permission to
7 hold their annual Women's Round Church Run on August 1st. They reiterated their request to close
8 Cochran Road from 8:25 am to 9:25 am, this would be the fourth year for that closure. There was
9 some discussion. Ms. Kane offered a motion to approve the race request and the road closure request
10 and was seconded by Mr. Sander, and the motion carried 5-0.

11

12 Warrants

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14 The warrants were approved and signed.

15

16 **5. Adjourn**

17 Motion by Mr. Hill to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Kane. So voted.