

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
JANURARY 5, 2015 MINUTES**

Members Present: Taylor Yeates; Chris Granda; Bard Hill; David Sander; Ellen Kane
Water Commission: Bruce Bailey
Absent: None
Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; Harold Irish; Maureen Kangley; Gary Bressor; Christy Witters; Joy Reap; Peter Pochop, Green Mountain Engineering; Jack Linn; Peter Mumford; Eveline Killian; Rod West; John Rankin; Ian Bender; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Mark Sperry, Town Counsel, and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Taylor Yeates called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Yeates asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of past Selectboard chair K. Peter Parent who passed away last week. Mr. Yeates then asked if there was any comment from the public for items not on the agenda.

Linda Parent, Town Clerk, said that petitions for elected office were open, and due on January 26th by 5 pm. She listed the open offices.

2. Join Meeting with Water Commission on the West Main Street Utility Extension

Mr. Yeates announced that this was a special joint session of the Selectboard and Water Commission to discuss the West Main Utility Extension project. The reason for the joint session was to inform both boards of the work that has been done on the scoping study by Green Mountain Engineering, to understand the costs of the project, and determine how to move forward with negotiations.

Mr. Hill then explained the three phases of the study: Phase I was the section from the schools to the Reap property; Phase 2 was from the Reap property to the end of the Gateway; Phase 3 would be from the Gateway through to the Riverview Commons mobile home park. Mr. Hill explained that the three phases were studied by Green Mountain Engineering for costs and revenues associated with each, and what a no-effect on rates scenario would require for each phase.

Peter Pochop from Green Mountain Engineering then went through the scoping study, and its conclusions. He noted he used flow estimates based on existing development, and not future development. He also noted that with the cost analysis, private costs to connect were not included. All hook-on fees shown were calculated according to current rates. The mobile home park was based on their metered data which had been provided. Debt was based on a 20-year term for sewer, and 30-year term for water.

Mr. Pochop also discussed Rural Development funding and how it may provide a grant of up to 75% of the costs to extend the line to a low income area. There was additional discussion of opportunities through the bond bank, state revolving loan funds and other options. Following Mr. Pochop's presentation on the report, the floor was opened to questions.

1
2 Christy Witters was concerned about the affordability of the water rates for mobile home owners. She
3 said that the average home in the village paid \$100 per month for water and sewer, and that would be
4 very high for a low income area like the mobile home park. She said even with waiving hook-on fees
5 it was potentially a large problem for them.

6
7 Mr. Granda said that until we enter formal negotiations we won't know what is expected to be paid.
8 The park owner is making a substantial wastewater improvement now, with a potential that they may
9 have other future costs. He noted there was already a lot assessment for water and sewer.

10
11 Mr. Hill said we have only one rate now, but could end up much different, based on negotiations.

12
13 Joy Reap asked about his potential. Cara LaBounty said that there is some ability to expand now
14 without public water and sewer. He feels that the current rates weren't acceptable to the owner – he
15 wouldn't pay the \$250,000 per year noted in the report. If we get rural development grants the there
16 should be room for a decreased rate. The other benefit is that the income survey of the mobile home
17 park would benefit the rest of the system on future funding applications, which would also help with
18 rates.

19
20 Gary Bressor asked if we were planning a vote for Town Meeting, and Mr. Hill said we were. Mr.
21 Bressor asked how the public would know if this was a good deal or not?

22
23 Mr. Hill said we had to make sure that the deal could not increase current user rates. Mr. Bailey said
24 that this would have a small benefit to current users but a larger benefit for the town, through
25 improvement of the tax base.

26 **Award of Contract for Fire Truck**

27
28
29 Mr. Yeates asked to put this discussion on hold for a minute to discuss the Fire Truck purchase and
30 relieve those who had come for that discussion.

31
32 Chief Tom Levesque explained that the Fire Department recently received bids for the fire truck that
33 was authorized at last Town Meeting. They received six bids, and his recommendation was to go with
34 a Toyne truck that fit his needs. This was not the lowest bid, but the most appropriate in his opinion,
35 because of the larger water tank. He also recommended obtaining the thermal imaging camera
36 equipment separately from the truck, for a slight cost savings.

37
38 There was some discussion on the purchase. Mr. Levesque said he expected to get 20 years out of this
39 truck. The purchase was under budget, and with a 50% cash down upon signing of contract, the
40 purchase price would be \$386,828 and the amount of that price expected to be borrowed was \$262,127
41 yielding an annual payment of \$52,425. Our current payment on the 2010 truck was \$50,500.

42
43 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve Purchase Order #2479 to Toyne for the 2015 Fire Truck, in an
44 amount of \$386,828, and was seconded by Mr. Hill. The motion carried 5-0.

45
46 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve Purchase Order #2478 to Reynolds for a Thermal Imaging
47 Camera, in the amount of \$5,900. Mr. Hill seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

48
49 Mr. Sander offered a motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract with Toyne once it is
50 available and was seconded by Mr. Hill. The motion carried 5-0.

1
2 The Selectboard thanked Chief Levesque and his command staff.

3
4 Mr. Yeates reopened the West Main Street issue.

5
6 Mr. Pochop explained that there were additional issues that needed to be addressed, such as the
7 income survey and the schedules for proceeding with work.

8
9 There was some additional discussion on this. Mr. Yeates then announced that both boards would
10 convene an Executive Session to discuss legal correspondence and opinion with attorney Mark Sperry.

11
12 Joy Reap asked if the Gateway zoning would be discussed tonight and Mr. Yeates said it would be on
13 for the 20th.

14
15 Mr. Granda offered a motion to enter Executive Session at 7:45 pm to discuss legal opinions on the
16 West Main Extension matter and was seconded by Ms. Kane. The motion carried 6-0. The Manager,
17 Peter Pochop and Mark Sperry were requested to attend this session.

18
19 At 8:15 pm, Mr. Sander offered a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene the open
20 session and was seconded by Mr. Hill. The motion carried 6-0.

21
22 Mr. Hill said that it was the intent of both boards to move forward with a specific negotiation with the
23 owner of Riverview Commons, with a negotiating committee consisting of two Selectboard members
24 with one Water Commission member, the Town Manager and Town Attorney, as necessary.

25
26 Mr. Granda added that we wanted to do this in time to take a vote on this.

27
28 Mr. Sperry brought up a Reimbursement Resolution, which would allow the Selectboard to “look
29 back” 60 days to recover attorneys fees and engineers fees from before the authorization, should it
30 happen. It was agreed that the amounts placed in the resolution would be \$2,500,000 for the bond and
31 \$50,000 of professional costs. Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the Reimbursement Resolution
32 as presented and was seconded by Mr. Hill, and the motion carried 5-0.

33
34 Mr. Bailey then offered a motion to adjourn the joint meeting, and was seconded by Mr. Hill, and the
35 motion carried 6-0.

36
37 Ms. Kane offered a motion to convene the regular Selectboard meeting and was seconded by Mr.
38 Sander, and the motion carried 5-0.

39
40 Police Discussions

41
42 Chief of Police Alan Buck was present to discuss crime reports and military weaponry. First, the
43 Chief explained that press releases went to a standard “media group north” set of contacts where they
44 may or may not be reported by local news. Some events get covered, some don’t. He does produce
45 the biweekly report, which could be placed online. He uses no names and no specific addresses.

46
47 He didn’t believe that Front Porch Forum should be a place for police press releases, and he said that
48 the founders of Front Porch Forum agreed and didn’t want to use the forum for police releases. He
49 said that Facebook was becoming a popular and quick communication method, but most departments
50 that have Facebook pages had someone assigned to keep them up and Richmond didn’t have the

1 manpower. Ms. Kane agreed that the town's website could be used more, but Facebook may be too
2 time consuming.

3
4 Chief Buck then provided an update on the recent stabbing. He said that multiple suspects were being
5 investigated, and may result in charges beyond just the stabbing suspect. He said that his officers had
6 already 40 hours of overtime into the case, and it had only been since December 26th.

7
8 The Manager asked to expand on this point of the overtime. He noted that many things were
9 happening with the department which required quite a bit of time. The Chief agreed, and noted that
10 for DUI the processing took almost three hours, and for a drug DUI case it could take six hours. Other
11 investigations included time out of town and other items that were largely hidden from the public. The
12 Manager said he wanted everyone to understand the time commitment it took to process these cases
13 and there was certainly a lot more to policing than just traffic tickets.

14
15 Mr. Granda said he wanted to know more about suspicious activity and was there a way to get the
16 word out quickly? Nixle was discussed as a possible option. There was additional discussion on this
17 and staff would explore ways to make the public aware of incidents, beyond the press release and
18 Front Porch Forum.

19
20 The Chief next discussed military weaponry. There had been rumors around town lately, and on Front
21 Porch Forum, that the Chief was seeking to obtain military weapons. Chief Buck said that beyond the
22 Humvee from three years ago, the only other item was the M-14 rifle which the department acquired
23 from a time prior to his arrival. There was no record of when this rifle was acquired, but it was a
24 semi-automatic weapon and still belonged to the military. The Chief noted that the Humvee, which
25 was outfitted as a rescue vehicle, and now housed at Richmond Rescue, was not used as a patrol
26 vehicle and was in fact still owned by the military also. These weapons could not be disposed of
27 unless by the military.

28
29 The chief then provided a listing of regular department weapons which included pistols, shotguns, .223
30 civilian-issue semi-automatic rifles and some other items that were considered normal for police use.
31 The Chief said that the M-14 was not used, was not in good condition, and that he had no desire for
32 other military weapons. He did say that having a weapon other than a pistol was necessary in some
33 cases, as in the case a few years ago with someone off of Wes White Hill that had a .30-06, which was
34 a high-powered rifle. That person could have shot an officer from a greater distance than the officer
35 could return fire with the pistol. In that case, a .223 weapon was held by an officer assisting the
36 arresting officer. The Chief also said that the state-wide recognition of the need for rifles came from a
37 case from 1997 where someone from New Hampshire killed several troopers with a high-powered rifle
38 and those responding had a difficult time with the weapons they had. They essentially got lucky with
39 their shots at that time but the rifles would have been a better choice. He said that for his rifles his
40 preference would be for civilian replacements when that time came.

41
42 Maureen Kangley asked how the public would know if he searches for military surplus? It was
43 answered that he would inform the Manager and the Selectboard if this was the case.

44
45 John Rankin suggested that these be discussed and approved first before we acquire any military
46 weaponry.

47
48 The Selectboard thanked Chief Buck for his work and explanations.

49
50 **3. Public Hearings: 2016 Capital Plan and Budget**

1
2 Mr. Sander offered a motion to open the public hearing for the 2016 Capital Plan and was seconded by
3 Mr. Hill, and the motion carried 5-0.

4
5 The Manager provided a brief overview of the proposed updates to the Capital Plan.

6
7 Mary Houle spoke about the windows for Town Center, and said that the two replaced several years
8 ago worked well but were quite expensive. The Manager said that it has never been decided how these
9 windows would be replaced. The project Ms. Houle spoke of required the original windows to be
10 removed, dismantled, cleaned, painted, reassembled and reinstalled. This took quite a bit of skilled
11 carpentry and was quite expensive, but retained the original windows. There was additional
12 discussion on the windows.

13
14 There were no further comments, and Mr. Yeates closed the public hearing. Mr. Hill offered a motion
15 to approve the 2016 Capital Plan as presented and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried
16 5-0.

17 18 2016 General and Highway Budget

19
20 The Manager explained the changes to this draft of the budget. He noted that Water Resources
21 Superintendent Kendall Chamberlin had provided a clarifying memo on the fire protection funds
22 requested in the Fire Department budget, that essentially mirrored what Mr. Yeates had suggested at
23 the last meeting. It was agreed by the Selectboard to amend the budget in this way, by removing
24 \$3,000 from Administration water and sewer, adding that amount to Fire Department water and sewer,
25 and adding \$11,570 to Fire Department fire protection costs.

26
27 Mr. Granda was not satisfied with how the Conservation Reserve Fund was shown in the budget. He
28 noted that spending was up, but spending had also been decreased by removing the fund contribution
29 and that would mislead some people on just how much spending was actually increasing. Mr. Yeates
30 said that we could not include that funding here, due to the Australian Ballot article. He said that
31 people should be able to understand this, and the budget presentation could clarify.

32
33 There was some discussion on this and it was agreed to add either a footnote, or an endnote, to the
34 budget explaining how spending was increasing, but approval of the Conservation Reserve Fund
35 article would increase spending by another 1.5%.

36
37 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the insertion of an endnote and was seconded by Mr. Sander.
38 The motion carried 4-1 with Mr. Yeates voting against.

39
40 Mr. Yeates asked for additional public comment on this item. There being no further comments, Mr.
41 Sander offered a motion to approve the budget as amended and was seconded by Mr. Hill and the
42 motion carried 5-0.

43 44 **4. Other Business**

45 46 Bridge Street Block Concerns

47
48 The Manager explained that he learned last week that during the renovation of one of the buildings,
49 that housed the Bridge Street Café, it was discovered that the brickwork on the front of the building
50 was no longer properly supported. After consulting with an engineer, the Manager closed the sidewalk

1 in that area. He said that the owner was working on a plan to replace the façade, however, brick was
2 expensive and not a likely alternative. The Manager noted the lack of public at this part of the meeting
3 but said it was suggested last week that the Conservation Reserve Fund might be used to bridge the
4 gap between costs of brick and costs of a wood-type siding, or brick-face façade. The Manager said
5 he was not making that request now, and didn't know the owner's intentions. However, this may
6 come up at a future meeting. The Selectboard took note of the situation.

7
8 Mary Houle was against the idea.

9 10 Merchant's Bank Note

11
12 The Manager explained that this was the note for the 2015 Highway truck. Mr. Hill offered a motion
13 to approve a note with Merchants Bank for the purchase of a 2015 Highway truck in the amount of
14 \$99,222, over five years, at 2.42 percent. Mr. Sander seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

15 16 Reports

17
18 The Manager reported that the Greystone septic issue, which was the subject of a health concerns, was
19 corrected. He was satisfied that the septic installation was done according to the approved plan,
20 however, the town made no warranty on the work. He felt that there was no longer any concern for a
21 claim against the town on this. The Manager also noted the police report for this meeting.

22
23 Ms. Kane spoke of Economic Development support for revisions to the Gateway zoning. They felt
24 this would improve the town, and especially the former Willis farm.

25 26 Approval of Minutes

27
28 Ms. Kane offered a motion to approve the minutes of December 11, 2014 and was seconded by Mr.
29 Granda and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Sander abstaining.

30
31 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the minutes of December 15, 2014 and was seconded by Mr.
32 Hill and the motion carried 5-0.

33
34 The Manager mentioned that the audit was in final draft and he would shortly set up a meeting with
35 the Selectboard chair and the audit team to review.

36
37 There was discussion on Green Mountain Power street lights and that the Manager should explore
38 conversion to LED.

39 40 Warrants

41
42 The warrants were approved and signed.

43 44 **5. Adjourn**

45 Motion by Mr. Sander to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hill. So voted.