

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
November 16, 2015 MINUTES**

Members Present: David Sander; Ellen Kane; Bard Hill; Taylor Yeates; Lincoln Bressor
Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Erin Wagg; Bruce LaBounty; Cara LaBounty; Mary Houle; Brian Wright, CSWD; Josi Kytle, Buttermilk LLC; Marie Thomas; Theresa Gilbert; Chris Granda; Steve May; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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

The Manager requested that the paperwork for the TD Bank equipment note be placed on the agenda for approval, and the Selectboard agreed to add as item IIIe.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Sander then asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mary Houle said that the 2nd quarter tax payment was due today, and thank you to all who paid their taxes. She said that some people were upset about the taxes they had to pay, but she wanted people to know that the Selectboard sets the tax rate and if they have concerns, they should come to the Selectboard.

Mr. Sander added that the State sets the education rate, but the Selectboard does the municipal rate.

2. Items for Presentation with Those Present

Community Development Block Grant Request – Buttermilk, LLC

Josi Kytle of Buttermilk, LLC, was present to talk about the Community Development Block Grant. They had not closed on the property and had no purchase and sales agreement yet, but they were looking into the slums and blights criteria for these grants. The town needed to be the applicant, but Buttermilk LLC would be the one completing the work. They initially estimated the entire work to be \$500,000.

The Selectboard wanted to know how much additional work this would place on town staff. The Manager replied that there would be oversight and additional meetings, and the financial transactions would pass through the town. He had no hours estimate.

Mary Houle asked if this project provided a 2% stipend in the way that the hazard mitigation grants did. There was some discussion on this, but Josi Kytle would look into this.

Mr. Bressor said he did not want to move forward on this grant without knowing what the town was in for as far as a final project. There was discussion on this topic also.

Chris Granda said that a couple of years ago a initial remediation estimate was developed by the Regional Planning Commission and asked if that had substantially changed. Ms. Kytle said yes, those

1 estimates were rough but had been refined over the past year. The asbestos removal was a much
2 higher estimate because the labor involved to reach the asbestos was more detailed now than the
3 original estimate. There was \$350,000 in cleanup costs and over \$250,000 in demolition costs.
4

5 Mr. Granda said he was worried about this project and the investment tax credits that were expiring.
6 He suggested the Interim Zoning committee should review this project as it goes on. Mr. Bressor
7 disagreed, and said that the Selectboard needs to be responsible for this.
8

9 Mr. Yeates said that this process puts the developer on the hook for getting the grant and doing the
10 cleanup. The deeper they get into this property the more likely a favorable outcome for them. He felt
11 that the preliminary plans had been talked about enough and we need to move forward.
12

13 Mr. Hill asked what the value of the property was. Ms. Kytile said that the appraisal they had said if it
14 were clean, it would be \$575,000. There is very little developable land on the site. Mr. Hill asked
15 about the net value after cleanup, and Ms. Kytile said probably very low.
16

17 Mr. Yeates said he felt that the Interim Zoning has addressed many problems with the site but the
18 required cleanup. Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the Resolution for the Vermont Community
19 Development Program grant application and was seconded by Mr. Hill.
20

21 Mr. Bressor said we needed to hold the public hearing first, and Mr. Yeates withdrew his original
22 motion.
23

24 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to set a public hearing for the Community Development Block Grant
25 application for VCDP funds for 7:00 PM, November 30, 2015, in Town Center, and to consider the
26 supporting resolution then. Ms. Kane seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.
27

28 Richmond Area Teen Center (RATC Nest)

29

30 The Manager explained the issue. About three years ago the Richmond Area Teen Center reorganized
31 and brought in new people to manage the nonprofit. They desired to reinvigorate the center, and offer
32 new programs to new constituent groups to better utilize the space. Town officials have been largely
33 supportive of this, however, in the past year, the use has grown beyond what was directly under the
34 control of the RATC Nest board. Now, not only usage by OCCC and RATC Nest activities, a local
35 singing group, The Minor Keys, and AA meetings use the center. All of these are worthwhile
36 community activities, although there are more requests to use the space. The lease, which is up for
37 renewal each April (now), in section 3 allows the space to be:
38

39 open to seniors, families, and community organizations to rent during
40 off-peak hours after receiving the written permission of the Landlord.

41 Before use by the public, Tenant shall prepare and submit to the
42 Landlord for approval, such approval to not be unreasonably withheld,
43 a written operations and safety plan to include, at least the following
44 items:

- 45 (a) A schedule of operations (days closed, opening times, closing times,
46 special events)
47 (b) Number of adult supervisors on-site during operating periods
48 (c) Rules to be followed by participants, such as drug, alcohol and tobacco

1 use and prohibiting noise that can be heard outside the Leased Premises and
2 by other tenants or the Landlord in other areas of the Entire Premises;

3 (d) Safety training for adult supervisors to include emergency exit routes,
4 operation of fire extinguishers and location of fire alarm pull switches. This
5 training shall be given to any participant that attends the Tenant's activities but
6 not visitors touring the facility.

7 (e) There shall be no combustion of materials by any means, including lit
8 candles or papers, etc. and no use of auxiliary heating units, such as electrical
9 or propane heaters, not supplied by the Landlord.

10
11 So while the use expansion is essentially allowed as specified above, the demand for the space
12 continues to grow. Theresa Gilbert and Erin Wagg were in the audience for a discussion on whether
13 or not to expand, how the RATC Nest will insure these groups, and generally answer the question of
14 how far can this go without significant changes to the lease and how the center operates.

15
16 The Selectboard engaged in a discussion with the teen center officials. Some concerns expressed
17 centered around insurance – who was insuring who, should the space be a general community center
18 or not and accessibility. The Selectboard wanted the Manager and teen center officials to meet and
19 develop rules, or a policy, on utilizing the space, but recognized that civic and community oriented use
20 of the space should be acceptable.

21 22 Chittenden Solid Waste District Lease

23
24 The Manager explained the issue. Richmond's facility here is called a "Drop Off Center" which is a
25 different facility than what's discussed below, and all CSWD Drop Off locations are operated by
26 CSWD.

27
28 The Manager attempted to get in touch with Mike Casella at All-Cycle about this venture, also. I was
29 directed here after calling Casella Waste Systems, one of the largest haulers in the state. All-cycle
30 (owned by Casella) runs a construction-level recycling & waste facility in Williston. Unfortunately,
31 Mr. Casella hasn't called back as of yet. The Manager also reached out to Jeff Myers, of Myers
32 Container, and was told by his staff that he was interested in the idea and that they run a facility in
33 Colchester similar to the one that Casella has, although it appears that they only do construction
34 recycling at this facility. These two facilities are called "Transfer Stations" and CSWD says they are
35 designed to handle loads of 1 cubic yard or more of waste, which is different than that pay-as-you-
36 throw bag setup at our Drop Off facility. The Manager has not yet spoken directly to Mr. Myers.

37
38 The clear distinction is that the Drop Off centers are resident-oriented and the Transfer Stations are
39 construction and commercial oriented. That being said, keeping the Drop Off business model is
40 probably doable under a private O&M contract. Further development of this idea will involve scoping
41 an RFP and sending it out, vetting responses and weighing the decision. It would probably be January
42 at the earliest before we would have answers to our questions.

43
44 Brian Wright of CSWD was present to talk a little more about this concept and the lease for the
45 facility. Mr. Wright said that the drop-off facilities were expected to be provided by the host
46 community. The current lease is up in December, and they requested another lease for a maximum of
47 20 years, in five-year, renewable increments.

1 Mr. Bressor said he wanted to renew this lease and not interested in having a transfer station here
2 because of noise and more truck traffic. This was a benefit to the town as it currently exists.
3

4 Ms. Kane agreed, this was a community benefit, not a revenue source.
5

6 Cara LaBounty said there was some confusion here, there were no discussions on making this a
7 transfer station, just a lease agreement with a private contractor and not CSWD, this wasn't any more
8 privatization than it is now. There was some discussion on this.
9

10 Brian Wright, of CSWD, said that they weren't opposed to privatization, but CSWD was subsidizing
11 these facilities, and if a private entity wanted to run these and lose money that's fine with them.
12

13 Mr. Yeates said that the value in what's operating now is no trash on the side of the road, recycling
14 that towns buy into. It may cost some money to have an attorney review this lease but we get back
15 greater benefits from this arrangement. Ms. Kane agreed with this.
16

17 Mr. Hill said that the service was very good and he appreciated questions from the public and it was
18 reasonable to ask about going private.
19

20 Bruce LaBounty said that just because it were privately run doesn't mean that there would be trash on
21 the side of the road.
22

23 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve a contract for a maximum length of 20 years, in five-year
24 terms, with Chittenden Solid Waste District. Mr. Yeates amended his motion to schedule this for the
25 November 30th meeting, and was seconded by Mr. Bressor. The motion carried 5-0.
26

27 **3. Other Business**

28 Greystone Drive Update

29
30
31 The Manager reported Steve Diglio from KAS has finalized the specs and will be sending them out
32 this week. He is meeting with utility folks and Highway on Tuesday morning to finalize some of the
33 work that needs to be coordinated. He feels that a two-week bid time is fine, and we can award,
34 possibly at a special meeting either on November 30th or sometime that week. This will allow
35 construction to start the week of the 7th, and for a three-week job should be done by the end of the
36 month. Being mostly earthwork, the colder weather at that time should not be a critical factor, but
37 snow can certainly slow things down.
38

39 We still have not heard back from FEMA if our Project Worksheet is approved as written. We also
40 need easements from homeowners, which are being prepared now, and should be ready before
41 Thanksgiving. We are down to the closing weeks this year, but we can still bid, award and construct
42 before the end of December.
43

44 Bids would be considered for review and award on November 30th.
45

46 FY2017 Budget

47
48 The Manager reported his findings on the personnel review for the Police Department and Highway
49 Department.
50

1 We've gathered quite a bit of information from surrounding towns on their wages and benefits. What
 2 is summarized below is just the base wage for new hires Highway and Police, with some advancement
 3 shown for Police (which, for Police, varies widely according to longevity and credentials). Actual
 4 salaries will differ. For where current Richmond personnel sit on our scale, you can see that in a
 5 separate attachment.
 6

Base wage comparison

	Richmond	Hinesburg	Huntington	Jericho	Bolton
Road Crew (new hire)	\$12.00/\$12.50	\$18.20/\$18.83	\$ 17.32	\$16.50- \$17.50	\$ 16.25
Hwy Foreman (current)	\$ 29.23	\$ 26.60	\$ 28.73		

	Richmond	Hinesburg	Williston	Essex	Waterbury	Bristol
Police Recruit	\$ 17.00	~\$19.00	\$ 23.69	\$ 23.00	\$ 17.25	\$18.18
Officer	\$ 17.50		\$ 23.69	\$ 23.00	\$ 17.25	\$18.18
Corporal	\$ 22.98			\$ 30.39	\$ 22.66	
Sergeant			\$ 30.50	\$ 29.44		\$23.16
Chief	\$ 35.05		\$ 40.44	\$ 46.90	\$ 32.18	\$31.17

7
 8 Richmond Highway also differs slightly, since we can offer an Equipment Operator wage which is
 9 higher than the base labor hire. It appears that we're very low in comparison with surrounding towns,
 10 though, with their initial hire vs. our experienced crew. We can re-examine our hiring "floor" but
 11 increasing some of the lower paid employees makes much sense in light of this, as if we need to
 12 replace an employee who might go to a competing town our new hire wage would probably be higher
 13 than in 2010.

14
 15 On Police, we're not as far off with some of the smaller towns nearby, but we're still the lowest.
 16 WCAX reported that South Burlington offers a \$7,500 hiring bonus for trained and credentialed new
 17 hires. The Manager didn't know that we can compete with that, or which agencies offer that incentive,
 18 but our initial hire wage should be brought up to at least Bristol's and maybe Hinesburg's wage to
 19 allow us to continue to recruit. This would naturally mean a bump for our existing officers of \$1.00 to
 20 \$2.00 per hour, resulting in an overall increase to the salary line of \$10,400 to \$20,800, with
 21 appurtenant increases in ss/medicare and retirement.
 22

23 Finally, it should be noted that in the Pay Range Movement Policy for Police, it lists the starting salary
 24 at \$16.00/hr. Upon the initiative of the Town Manager and at the urging of the Chief, we've changed
 25 that to \$17.00 in practice.
 26

27 Mr. Hill suggested we needed a town-wide reassessment of the salary grid. Mr. Sanders said that in
 28 the nine years since this was implemented, the starting salary hasn't gone up much. There was
 29 discussion on the salary grid and movement range.
 30

1 Mr. Yeates said that if you look at town size in Chittenden County, there is the same crime here as in
2 Essex. Just saying budget size does not dictate how you handle any specific direction but we need to
3 have long-term employees.

4
5 Ms. Kane said we had less revenue than other towns but should we share an officer with another town?

6
7 Mr. Bressor said it isn't just dollars but interest and advancement opportunities.

8
9 The Selectboard wanted a comparison of overtime to cover a vacant position versus paying for that
10 position, and how that might affect vehicle fleet size.

11
12 There was a brief discussion on the Fire Department. The Manager noted that their reserve was
13 funded at \$28,500 which provided some ability to make changes, Mr. Yeates was working with them
14 to submit a grant for new turnout gear, and while the building needed a lot of work, the Selectboard
15 should consider replacing the building. It would never be ADA accessible and had numerous
16 restrictions and was functionally obsolete.

17
18 There was further discussion, and the budget would be taken up again at the next meeting.

19
20 Delinquent Tax Policy

21
22 The Manager explained that there had been several problems over the past ten years or so with
23 uncollectable delinquent taxes, particularly on unlanded mobile homes in the mobile home park. Part
24 of this was due to the condition of the mobile home, making it unsuitable for habitation and offering
25 no collateral for the taxes. The other part of the problem was the rising balances for long-term
26 repayment agreements and subsequent delinquencies. The Manager proposed an amendment to the
27 collection of delinquent taxes which focused on annual tax sales and repayment agreements no longer
28 than one year in length.

29
30 Ms. Kane wanted to know if we had helped people find assistance. She was on the board of directors
31 for Opportunities Credit Union, who might be able to help people in poor financial condition.

32
33 Mr. Yeates said he understood the logic on this but there needed to be more explanation on what we're
34 doing to help people come current. This policy doesn't address the whole problem, and it isn't
35 balanced.

36
37 Ms. LaBounty said that if a mobile home is in the floodplain, they can't get financing. Also, many of
38 the older homes won't qualify for financing and its always an issue.

39
40 Mr. Yeates said that the data shows that mobile homes are disproportionately effected here. Mr.
41 Bressor clarified that the policy didn't discriminate but the delinquencies and tax sales seem to point to
42 disproportionate distribution on mobile homes. There was more discussion and requests for further
43 information by the board.

44
45 Memorial for Fire Chief Tom Levesque

46
47 Mr. Sander said he'd like to see a meaningful and lasting tribute to Chief Levesque, rather than a
48 donation to a fund. Mr. Hill and Mr. Yeates agreed. The Manager said that some had suggested
49 dedicating the new Emergency Services Building to him, and the board thought that was appropriate.
50 Mr. Yeates reported that the RFP process for an architect to help with feasibility had begun.

1
2 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager
3

4 The Manager pointed to the Police Report and Financial Reports.
5

6 Mr. Bressor spoke about correspondence from the Trails Committee regarding use of the buyout
7 property on Cochran Road. He said there was a need for parking for trails in that area, and the Safford
8 Preserve was accessed from Cochran Road, just near this property. There was some discussion, and it
9 was noted that Chris Granda was taking the lead on the input for use of the property.
10

11 The Manager reported that the crosswalks on Bridge Street were often difficult to notice, and
12 especially at the top of the hill, the mid-block walk was difficult to notice pedestrians due to the
13 parking there. There was some discussion. Mr. Hill said several people had complained to him, and
14 he suggested something to make drivers more aware, or a flashing beacon of some kind. Perhaps Pete
15 Gosselin had some ideas?
16

17 The Manager reported that the radar speed sign on Jericho Road above the school had been removed
18 for water line work, but will be replaced soon.
19

20 The Round Church Lease could be either a quit-claim, as originally done, or a traditional lease. The
21 reasons for the quit claim back in 1976 were so the Richmond Historical Society could control the
22 property for the purpose of securing grants, but things had changed and the town would now also be
23 eligible for these grants. The Richmond Historical Society was fine with a traditional lease at this
24 point. The Selectboard agreed that a traditional lease should be sought, and a 40 year term was fine to
25 begin negotiations with.
26

27 The Town Manager then presented a draft schedule for the town plan, which called for adoption at the
28 end of next Summer. The board asked that this be finalized and placed on the Town website, as well
29 as the Town Plan official website.
30

31 Approval of Warrants
32

33 The warrants were approved. It was noted that the Library postage would be paid but the issue
34 surrounding it was still outstanding and discussions with the Library were ongoing.
35

36 Approval of Minutes
37

38 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the minutes of October 15, 2015 and was seconded by Ms. Kane
39 and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Ms. Kane abstaining.
40

41 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the minutes of November 2, 2015 and was seconded by Ms. Kane
42 and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Bressor abstaining.
43

44 Recreation Committee/LIRD Committee appointment
45

46 Steve May was present to talk about his interest in serving on the Recreation Committee, Police
47 Advisory Committee and possibly Lake Iroquois Recreation District representative. Mr. May spoke a
48 little about his background in counseling and that he was new to town and wanted to be more
49 involved.
50

1 Mr. Yeates said it was nice to see someone was interested. The Police Advisory Committee was
2 inactive, but Mr. Yeates offered a motion to appoint Mr. May to the Recreation Committee and Lake
3 Iroquois Recreation District Representative from Richmond and was seconded by Ms. Kane, and the
4 motion carried 5-0.

5
6 Approval of TD Bank Note

7
8 The Manager explained this was the note and resolution for the previously approved equipment
9 borrowing for the Fire Truck and Highway Truck. The amount was \$289,005 at 1.83%, over five
10 years.

11
12 Mr. Yeates offered a motion to approve the resolution and note for the TD Bank short-term equipment
13 note in the amount of \$289,005 payable over five years, at 1.83% interest. Mr. Bressor seconded the
14 motion and the motion carried 5-0.

15
16 Mr. Yeates briefly stepped out.

17
18 Police Cruiser Purchase

19
20 The Manager explained that the Ford police SUV was held up somehow. Previously, the board had
21 approved a purchase from Shearer who holds the Vermont State contract for police vehicles. The
22 vehicle was ordered in April but had not arrived, and Shearer was unable to provide a delivery date.
23 However, Chief Buck had found one on the lot in a dealership in Massachusetts. He was requesting
24 cancelation of the first order and authorization for the second, which was about \$450 more for the
25 same vehicle, striped and outfitted. There was discussion of some of the details, and Mr. Yeates
26 returned.

27
28 Mr. Hill offered a motion to cancel the purchase order with Shearer Chevrolet and replace with the
29 MHQ purchase order and was seconded by Ms. Kane. The motion carried 5-0.

30
31 There was no executive session.

32
33 **4. Adjourn**

34 Motion by Mr. Bressor to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hill. So voted.