

**R I C H M O N D   S E L E C T B O A R D**  
**S P E C I A L   M E E T I N G**  
**D e c e m b e r   1 1 ,   2 0 1 7   M I N U T E S**

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Members Present:    Lincoln Bressor; Bard Hill; Steve May; David Sander

Absent:                    Stephen Ackerman

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Others Present:    Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Sergeant Matthew Nadeau; Benjamin Heath; Mary Houle; Bruce LaBounty; Cara LaBounty; James Brown; Rick Barrett; Bob Stafford; Brian Carpenter; Wright Preston; Richard Jones; Patty Brushett; Bob reap; Christy Witters; Jack Linn; Henry Bush; Guy Roberts; Fran Thomas; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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Lincoln Bressor called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**1. Welcome and Public Comment**

Mr. Bressor asked if there were any comments from the public, but there were none.

**2. Police Station Site Proposals Discussion**

Police Building Committee members Bob Stafford, Rick Barrett and Brian Carpenter were present to explain site proposal results and their recommendations. Mr. Sander also explained the history of the committee, starting with the Public Safety Building in early 2016, to the mission it has now – which was reviewing the proposals for siting the police station.

Mr. Stafford explained a little about the scoring for the responses. During this, Cara LaBounty asked why her properties weren't scored. She had put together three offers and the committee did not look at two of them. She said she wasn't staying for the presentation and was disappointed that she wasn't contacted about this and it was an insult to not receive a phone call or an email. She said that if we wanted to cover Bolton or Jericho, this would be a great location but she was no longer supportive.

Fran Thomas asked that the site RFP be explained further. Brian Carpenter explained the process and how the committee scored the responses.

Patty Brushett asked if this was a done deal? Mr. Hill and Mr. Bressor commented that there was no plan in place and that the voters would need to approve bonding authority before any buildings could be constructed.

Christy Witters said that the project started as a joint public safety building for police, fire and rescue but is now only a police department study. She said that the town needed to look at renovating the Town Center building also as part of this study, and that we needed to be conservative.

Mr. Bressor said that the town has examined continuing to house the police department in the Town Center building and it just wasn't suitable for the standards they need to meet.

Mr. Carpenter explained the scoring sheets and the review process. Mr. Stafford spoke of the high scored responses from J. Hutchins, Bob and Joy Reap, Gristmill (Buttermilk), and the water tank site.

1 J. Hutchins and Gristmill had offered leased space in retained buildings, and the Reaps could offer that  
2 also. The Reap site was an acre to purchase at the West Main site.

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4 Mr. Barret spoke about the advantages of a leased building, including that a bond vote was not  
5 necessary. However, at the end of the lease the town owned nothing. The water tank site had  
6 concerns about adequate size.

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8 Mr. May was concerned about stranded costs.

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10 Patty Brushett asked what was the problem we were trying to solve?

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12 Sergeant Matthew Nadeau explained that the current police station, inside the Town Center building,  
13 had several deficiencies. He explained that the evidence storage room was full and that it could be  
14 broken into. Sharing evidence storage with another agency was not a good solution as the chain of  
15 custody for evidence was very demanding, and shared agency evidence storage may lead to issues.  
16 There was no controlled entry into the building and the public entrance was shared with potentially  
17 violent prisoners. There was no vehicle storage available that was secure, the holding and interview  
18 room was small and close enough that prisoners could contact the officers while their back was turned.  
19 In the future the town may have 24-hour coverage and staffing levels may change. There was also no  
20 separate juvenile room, and other items were also discussed.

21  
22 There was quite a bit of discussion on the status of the current police department area. Some concerns  
23 were expressed over the inadequacies and how the town of Richmond may be held responsible in an  
24 accident. Some options to solve them were brought up.

25  
26 Taylor Yeates, of Richmond Rescue, and former member of the public safety building committee,  
27 explained that the current station does not meet minimum federal standards for safety or security. A  
28 recent Burlington Free Press article explained the situation well. We could debate on how to have  
29 police services, but if we choose to continue to provide them then we have to meet standards.

30  
31 Other discussion followed along a similar line, as to whether current conditions could be improved  
32 without Richmond investing in a new facility or if there were other options. Mr. Hill noted that shared  
33 dispatch was coming soon, and other services may follow.

34  
35 Mr. Bressor was concerned that there were no budget figures attached to most of the proposals. He  
36 felt we're looking at spending \$200,000 per year and maybe we should study how we provide services  
37 instead.

38  
39 Jack Linn spoke about our department's size and said we should compare what other similar towns  
40 have for police and what they pay. He asked what makes us more safe than other towns without  
41 police.

42  
43 There was additional discussion along these lines, and then a short review of the sites presented. The  
44 board determined that a lease option was not what they were looking for. Mr. Bressor asked where did  
45 the Selectboard go from this point. From the discussion, it was clear that there was not a proposal that  
46 could be acted upon, and the Selectboard was having trouble identifying whether or not the town  
47 supported any further movement on a new building.

48  
49 The board's discussion then turned to how to gauge the public's interested in police services and a  
50 police building. There was no proposal to request a bond for. The board wanted to know how the

1 public felt about the possibility of a \$3 million building, without an up or down vote on bonding to  
2 build it in the absence of a real proposal.

3

4 The board discussed the issue and directed the Town Manager to develop a question for the next  
5 Selectboard meeting that would gauge the public's interest in pursuing a building, that could be placed  
6 on the ballot for Town Meeting.

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8 The Selectboard thanked everyone for their input.

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10 **3. Adjourn**

11 Motion by Hill to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Sander. So voted.