

Selectboard Minutes
11/16/2020

Members Present by Zoom: Christine Werneke, David Sander, Roger Brown, Bard Hill
Absent: Katie Mather

Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; Kyle Kapitansky, acting Police Chief; Ravi Venkataraman, Planner; Kendall Chamberlain, Water & Sewer Superintendent; Linda Parent, Town Clerk, the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15, also present: Judy Rosovsky, Bob Heiser, Ruairi Hutchison, Logan Hegg (CSWD), Chris Conant; Lake Iroquois, Jay Furr, Miles Haskett, Ike Patch, JA Davis, Mary Peet, John Rankin, Martha Nye, D. Schnakenberg, John Low, Derek Miodownik, June Heston, Jack Linn, Jane Clifford, Chip Noonan, Virginia Clarke, June Heston, Tara Arneson, Roger Crouse, and Jane Clifford

Called to Order: 7:00 PM

Welcome by David

Comments from the public:

II. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a) Recognition of Miles Heskett's work on the new Town Center sign

David thanked Miles for the effort in the design and installation adding that the sign looks professionally made and installed.

Miles reported:

- that he had a presentation to show the board that detailed the construction and installation of the new town sign.

Discussion included:

- that Christine thought the sign looked very professional, Katie and Bard agreed adding that it is easy to read when driving by.
- that the posts are cedar and sealed to prevent rot.

b) Discussion of potential adjustments to Town Meeting due to restrictions in place to slow the spread of COVID-19

Josh reported:

- that as we look ahead it is unlikely that an in-person Town Meeting will be able to take place in March.
- that Australian ballot could be used to move all items through for Town Meeting.
- that at an upcoming meeting the Selectboard could move to have items voted on by Australian ballot.
- that there will be more updates coming
- that there would need to be an informational meeting at least 10 days before voting if using Australian Ballot to decide the budget
- that Roger and Katie's seats are open for them to run again or someone to run against them. That this year no petition is needed. Linda added that mailing the

ballots back would be preferred to people showing up to vote and that the budget information should be gotten out early to voters.

- that changes to the budget and non-binding resolutions would not be possible.

Discussion included:

- that there could be an extra meeting in February
- that the next budget meeting is Dec. 14, 2020.
- that making an announcement on Front Porch Forum to let people know we may go to Australian Ballot for all items would be necessary
- that the Selectboard would need to make that decision in early January.
- that as to Selectboard candidates no signatures are needed
- that the Selectboard may be able to waive the requirement for signatures for Australian Ballot items or signatures could be obtained by using an electronic petition. Josh will find out what the possibilities are for changes to Town Meeting Day to keep within the governor's guidelines for COVID.
- that there is time for the public to discuss the budget at the budget meetings
- that the possibility of moving Town Meeting to a virtual meeting is not possible since there is no provision to vote virtually.
- that the budget needs to be finalized by mid-January
- that we should make it public knowledge that there are special budget sessions and there will not be a way to change things on Town Meeting Day.
- that Ike Patch thought losing the way we have met for Town Meeting Day is sad. He also asked about publishing the budget beforehand. Josh said that the draft budget is on the Town website now and he would put a link to the information on Front Porch Forum.
- that John Low thought an informational card mailed to households would be helpful
- that the Selectboard member's emails are available on the Town website
- that the budget could be broken down by department to vote on.
- that specific line items could be their own Australian Ballot item.
- that this will be a continued item for discussion.

c) Discussion of preparedness to react to potential restrictions on workplace operations from the State to slow the spread of COVID-19

Josh reported:

- that last week there were new restrictions added by the Governor's most recent orders, mostly related to social gatherings
- that if people can work from home, they are, and we are limiting in person meetings
- that if more restrictions come up some departments may be unable to keep their workforce busy adding we will keep an eye on it

d) Consideration of approving appointment to the DRB alternate position

Ravi reported:

- that he had posted the position and he received a response from David Schnakenberg. He would like to serve on the DRB Board and Planning Commission which is not a problem.

Discussion included:

- that he has lived in Richmond 3.5 years

Bard moved to appoint David Schnakenberg to the DRB alternate position, Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Christine, Bard, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

e) Consideration of appointing an E-911 Coordinator

Josh reported:

- that Suzanne Montegna was the E-911 Coordinator with her departure Ravi Venkataraman has offered to be the coordinator until the Zoning Officer position is filled.

Katie moved to appoint, Ravi Venkataraman, as the E-911 Coordinator, Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Christine, Bard, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

e2 was added to the agenda) Approval of additional paper of Record:

Josh reported:

- that Ravi has been able to put notice in Seven Days and if we are able to move the days the Zoning Officer is in the office the practice can continue.

Discussion included:

- that Ravi reported a \$200 savings by using Seven Days instead of the Burlington Free Press

Roger moved to add "Seven Days" as a newspaper of record; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Christine, Bard, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

f) Update on Notices to Proceed from CCRPC on UPWP Grants

Josh reported:

- that both grants were granted
- that Ravi will work with both committees.

Discussion included:

- that Ravi said the work is moving forward and there has been great input from the community.
- that there would be a working map and survey to get input from residents

g) Discussion of potential ballot item related to retail sales of cannabis

Josh reported:

- that the vote would be for resale operations of cannabis
- that there is no special tax that would come back to the town.
- that the Selectboard or 5% of the voters signing a petition could get the item on the ballot
- that Josh will follow up about the possibility of online petitions

Discussion included:

- that without a local sales tax no funds could come back to the town.
- that IF the Selectboard wanted to have a ballot item for retail sales of cannabis and the wording would be important
- that there could be a special meeting called surrounding retail sales of cannabis and add it to the last budget meeting

- that Josh said there are a few people who have expressed interest and he will check with VLCT for wording.
- that Jack Linn wondered if this needed to be taken up this year. Roger said there is interest from individuals and if there is a petition it makes the ballot.
- that this will be brought up at the next meeting.

h) Update from MMUUSD Board

Derek Miodownik reported:

- that he is on the MMUUSD school board
- that there were other school board members on the call to introduce themselves to the Selectboard. They were identified as: Chip Noonan, Tara Arneson, and Cindy Preston.
- that Derek asked if there were any areas of interest the Selectboard would like to hear about and if there were areas of interest the Selectboard would want them to know more about

Discussion included:

- that Bard asked about the School Resource Officer (SRO) position saying he hoped the subject could be taken up at a future date.
- that knowing about the SRO position would be helpful because of the budget implications.
- that the Selectboard has not taken a position on the SRO position and with COVID the conversation has not been had since August. Ruairi Hutchison said the Richmond Equity Group has reasons for not having an SRO and would like to have input. Jay Furr thought SRO's are not necessary as far as the Equity Group is concerned. Derek Miodownik said community engagement is important and there is a time for comment during the school board meetings.
- that the route 2 repaving will impact school travel and morning commute
- that working together to connect people to services is important during these times
- that the school board budget meeting is 6pm on Thursday

David thanked the board for coming and having the conversation

i) Update from Lake Iroquois Association

Chris Conant reported:

- that Jack Linn is the Richmond resident board member and that Jane Clifford, Roger Crouse, and Jeff who are other board members are on the call
- that they work on the conservation of Lake Iroquois
- that the area is about 200 acres of recreational opportunities
- that phosphorus levels have gone down
- that the ecosystem restoration grant project received the highest rating indicating that the project was above and beyond the baseline requirements for functionality
- that they have redesigned their website for improved communication and outreach
- that the watermilfoil control permit application has been submitted
- that the "Greeter and Boat Wash Program" is being used as a model for other lakes in the state
- that recreation in the area was higher this year than he has ever seen it.
- that the removal of milfoil by hand was not done due to COVID
- that there will be an "ice out" fund raiser starting Jan. 1st
- that there are several new projects to remediate the watershed areas

- that the Iroquois appropriations request is up by \$1000
- that they appreciate the towns support

Discussion included:

- that Jack Linn said Lake Iroquois does not get the attention from Richmond residents that it should.
- that Chris Conant spoke about the trails by the lake and said he would love to see them used more by the kids of Richmond.
- that Christine said she had received emails from residents concerned about using the pesticide for milfoil. She asked if they have done any outreach on the topic and when the application would take place. Chris Conant replied that that the application needs to be done during warm weather and with COVID the process has been delayed. Jane Clifford added that the pesticide is not the only tool being used but the other tools have not shown the necessary progress to bring the lake back. Jack Linn said he does not like the use of pesticides, but the buckthorn is so bad that the state sprayed roundup. He said we need to use the tools in our toolbelt.

j) Update on withdrawal of request to use Conservation Reserve Funds to partially fund a conservation easement on the Peet Farm

Josh reported:

- that there had been a request of \$20,000 to use conservation reserve funds for the easement but the request was withdrawn

Discussion included:

- that Bob Heiser said Danny Peet had approached the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) about helping support the sale of the property to Jericho Settlers
- that the project was to protect the land and keep it as farmland
- that there was a thought that having a trail could be useful to the town
- that Jericho Settlers Farm was concerned about dogs being on the trail for various reasons
- that the Buttermilk property had no easement
- that there were requests to change easement language and the Peet family and Jericho Settlers Farm decided to not move forward with the easement because it was jeopardizing the sale
- that VLT is still interested in keeping the land agricultural
- that there could be conversations in the future about an easement but that the timing is not right

k) Consideration of approving an easement through the Town Center to the Peet Farm

Josh reported:

- that this is the same easement that was before the Selectboard at the last meeting.
- that the Peet's have been using the access for years

Discussion included:

- that this is certifying something that has been in place for some time

Bard moved to approve the easement through Town Center to provide access to the Peet Farm unless a petition objecting to the conveyance is brought to the Town as described in

the 1061 notice. And to appoint Josh Arneson as the Town's Duly Authorized Agent to sign the 1061 Notice and the Easement; Katie seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Christine, Bard, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

l) Consideration of approval of a one (1) year lease with CSWD

Josh reported:

- that the current lease expires at the end of December
- that the current lease was amended to allow for a one (1) year extension.
- that there were two (2) other proposed changes, one (1) is related to the number of days the site is open as they adjust to COVID and the other is taking language out about the sale of bagged compost.

Discussion included:

- that we should move forward with the one (1) year lease,
- that CSWD operates under a charter
- that replacing them is more complicated than you would think
- that Bard did not like the language "less than 3 days a week" thinking it could be no days and should be changed to being open at least one (1) day a week
- that a resident was unhappy about the ground glass being buried and then CSWD file for an after the fact permit
- that Logan Hegg said that he was in favor of the one (1) year lease extension
- that conditional approval would be ok with Josh following up by email after asking for the site to be open at least one day barring an emergency

Bard moved to accept the lease conditionally, with wording to included the site being open at least one day a week, with the exception of an emergency situation, and that Josh will have authority to negotiate the wording and sign the lease; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Christine, Bard, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Discussion continued:

- that there is concern that CSWD would not have the site open for non-emergent reasons.
- Josh suggested wording that would require CSWD to come back to the board if the site would not be open three (3) days a week.
- that any executive order would trump the lease agreement
- that Roger asked if CSWD is negotiating less days they are open at other locations. Logan Hegg said he did not know.
- that Josh thought CSWD did not inform him prior to the previous shut down
- that the site is currently open two (2) days a week

The vote was taken after the discussion continued.

m) Update on Police Chief hiring process

Josh reported:

- that the hiring process is dragging on and he hoped shortly there would be an announcement.

n) Update on plan to hold a special meeting of the Selectboard on Dec. 14 to work on the FY22 budget

Josh reported:

- that the next budget meeting is scheduled for Dec. 14, 2020.

o) Update that the agreement regarding curation of artwork at the Town Center will be discussed at a future Selectboard meeting

Josh reported:

- that there should be another break-out meeting after Radiate has a chance to review the document

p) Update on Dugway Rd. project

Josh reported:

- that we have had some progress.
- that the archeological review has been completed and we are ready
- that the Army Corp of Engineers still has to sign off on the permit
- that the Rosen easement for the construction are is ready for their review
- that next month the engineer will come to the Selectboard meeting
- that when things happen will depend on when we hear back from FEMA

Discussion included:

- that Bard wondered if there is a timeline published for FEMA's response. Josh said he would find out.

III. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes:

Bard moved to approve the Minutes of 11/02/2020, Roger seconded. Roll Call Vote: Roger, Christine, Katie, Bard, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Bard moved to approve the Minutes of 11/09/2020, Katie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Roger, Christine, Bard, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Invoices and warrants:

Roger moved to approve the warrants, excluding the electronic warrant, as presented, Katie seconded. Roll call vote: Roger, Christine, Bard, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Discussion included:

- that the electronic warrant is to transfer \$215,000 from the Town Center Fund to the general fund because in past years expenses were paid from the general fund and not reimbursed.
- that there was a question as to how the fund balance got down to \$459,144 from \$527,841. It was decided to exclude the electronic warrant from the approval process.

Josh will send the warrant out for signatures using DocuSign.

Purchase Orders:

Bard moved to amend PO 4021 back to its original amount of \$29,070; Christine seconded. Roll Call Vote: Roger, Christine, Bard, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

IV. Discuss Items for Next Agenda

retail cannabis

covid update

Discussion included:

- that Christine said Kendall reported on COVID testing previously and asked if it was still being done. Kendall replied that there is COVID residue because we accept septage from other areas and that testing has not been done since a charge of \$4000 per test was implemented
- that there is no way to test just Richmond sewage
- that there are three (3) weeks until the next Selectboard meeting and if needed there could be another meeting scheduled before then to address COVID issues
- that in the spring everyone was just figuring things out and now there are processes in place to address COVID
- that if we needed to have a special meeting 48-hour notice is needed to warn the meeting

V. Executive Session if necessary -none

VI. Adjourn

Katie moved to adjourn; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Christine, Bard, Roger, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. The meeting ended at 10:20PM.