

Selectboard Minutes
8/02/2021

Members Present by Zoom: Bard Hill

Members In-Person: Christine Werneke, David Sander, June Heston

Absent:

Others Present In- Person: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Mary Houle, Breck Knauft, VT Youth Conservation Corp (VYCC); Ian Bender, George Wyrd, Sarah Recres, CSWD; , Jeff Atwood and the meeting was recorded by MMCTV

Others Present by Zoom: Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin.; Kendall Chamberlain, Water & Sewer Superintendent;_Ravi Venkataraman, Planner; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Connie Bona, Finance; Lauk Parke, Michael Casella, Casella Waste; Cathleen Gent, Katie Mather, Laurie Dana, Allen Knowles, Abby Bruzas, Logan Hegg, AMCVEY, Jon Kart, Jamal C., Paul Reiss, Ann Neuman, Natty Jamison, Jeff Forward, 802-324-4885

Called to Order: 7:05 PM

Welcome by Christine

Public Comment:

Discussion included:

- that Jeff Atwood said he noticed that affordable housing was on the agenda and would like to continue his discussion from last month. He apologized about being a little animated at the last meeting and then went on to become very animated again. He said affordable housing was something he had been concerned about for a long time and felt passionate about, that Chittenden County being 5000 homes behind was a political failure and that the money coming was not nearly enough. Jeff Atwood wanted to know what Richmond's plan was. Christine responded by asking him if he had a plan. Jeff Atwood took offense to being asked the question. Christine replied that she did not appreciate, nor was it appropriate, to be yelled at, she advised that if someone is looking for something, then asking was appropriate, not yelling.

Bard asked that people making public comments be respectful and remember we are neighbors, even if we are passionate about certain topics. He added that if there was to be a discussion, it should be warned to allow for others to participate.

- that Mary Houle was concerned that the organizers of the event that closed Cochran Rd. did not send notices out properly and wanted them to be notified that any future events needed more notice.
- that Mary Houle asked about delinquent taxes being a future topic
- that Mary Houle asked about information related to ARPA funds being posted on website so people would know what is going on

- that Mary Houle asked about time sheets and evaluations being brought to meetings like they used to and thought overtime should not be allowed for audits, she said at one time there was \$350 in overtime pay and thought people should be looking at it more closely.
- that Ian Bender commended Christine on how she handled a previous situation. He asked if documents like the grand list and property cards could be made available on the website as some other towns have done. Christine responded that there was a town website project currently and the suggestion was a good one.

Additions to the Agenda:

New CDC COVID rules for Chittenden County will be discussed after (d).

II. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a) Consideration of approval of notice to fill a vacancy on the Selectboard

Christine reported:

- that Cody Quattrocci resigned from the Selectboard and Water Sewer Commission effective immediately
- that the position would be filled by the Selectboard, she asked members of the public who might be interested in the position make their intent known
- that the open seat was a three-year seat, with the appointment being until the next town meeting, unless there is a petition for a vote before town meeting, then that person could run for the remainder of the seat time.

Discussion included:

- that Breck Knauft asked when letters of interest should be in by. Christine said within the next two weeks so they could be considered. June thought as soon as possible. Christine said an appointment should be made at the 9/7/21 meeting. Bard thought having a timeline would be best. The timeline is: 8/18 letters of interest are to be received, 9/07 the new Selectboard member would be selected with Linda Parent attending so she could swear the new member in immediately
- that Ian Bender asked if the candidates will be known beforehand. June said it is an appointment, so was a little different. Josh said he could post letters of interest on the website as they come in. Bard said we should let people know what the stipend would be.

David moved to approve the notice to fill the vacancy on the Selectboard; June seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

David and Christine thanked Cody Quattrocci for his service.

b) Consideration of applying for a Vermont Community Development Program grant in collaboration with Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC)

Christine reported:

- that Breck Knauft, from VYCC, was at the meeting:

- that VYCC was interested in working with the town on a community development grant
- that VYCC hires young people and put them to work
- that in order to run the program they need to house some staff but would like to house more than they are currently
- that the housing they have needs a new roof and other repairs
- that this would be for low-income housing, and would be asking for \$400-\$500,000 with the match of 10% coming from VYCC
- that the first step was to have the Selectboard approve the submission of the grant

Discussion included:

- that Breck Knauft reported that the expected housing capacity was thirteen (13) people up from the seven (7) currently housed and that the people living there would likely to be two full time staff and Americorp members that are 16-24 years old from VT and all over the country
- that Bard asked if housing were not filled by those people what would the possibilities be for the housing. Ian said he could not imagine a time when housing would not be filled. He said the beneficiaries need to be low income for the grant adding that Americorp members live on a very small stipend. Christine said the town was recently able receive a small administration fee for work done in unison with another organization, Breck Knauft affirmed that administration fees could be recouped by the town or made as a donation.
- that Cara LaBounty asked if the grant was to remodel the farmhouse where seven (7) people currently live and wanted to know what would happen with the yurts. Breck Knauft said it was and that the yurts may continue to be used. Cara LaBounty asked if it would be less expensive to build a new house. Connie responded that the house was an historical site. June said the farmhouse has been in need for a long time. Christine said there is a need for housing.
- that food insecurity work is being done right here in Richmond

Bard moved to approve applying for the Vermont Community Development Program in collaboration with the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, to adopt the resolution related to this grant, to set a hearing date of September 7, 2021, at 7pm, and to appoint Josh Arneson as the Grant Program Manager; June seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

c) Consideration of sending a follow up letter to VTrans regarding the Rt. 2 repaving project

Christine reported:

- that this topic has been around for a few years
- that there was a meeting with VTRANS with notes from the meeting provided in the packet

Discussion included:

- that Bard said the project is being called “repaving” but has extensive work being done. He said that if the project were called something else like “reconstruction” the project would have different funding and he was frustrated by the process
- that failing stormwater was noted by the Fire Dept. and would be best addressed before the repaving. David said going back and redoing the stormwater by digging it up would be disruptive to emergency services. June said that we need to do it right the first time, not do it twice.
- that path’s forward from the notes were discussed, Bard said what we wanted was to keep the project going and address the stormwater which was not one of the paths forward noted. He wondered if we should escalate the request upwards since there was not an agreement to this at the meeting. Christine wondered if there was miscommunication about terms and phrases used, she thought more information was needed about lines, culverts, etc. Bard said we asked them to replace every failed culvert and catch basin in the project and it is a problem that the state is asking us to identify which of their culverts are failing. Christine asked if a list could be put together and have the list be what was being asked for with it presented as if it is within their project
- that Bard said the 5’ depth limit was the issue, if a failing culvert were at 5’2” then it would not be replaced. It should be that they should tell us which ones they are not willing to replace whether 5’ or 7’.
- that Jon Kart thanked the Selectboard for meeting with VTRANS saying this has been a decade’s worth of discussion and the state was using delaying tactics. His advice was to get help from our state representative and Chittenden County Senators, to get a full proposal that addresses the needs of the state road. They should be willing to do for the Town of Richmond what they have done in other towns.
- that Jeff Forward said there was a stormwater utility and was a bigger deal now than it was 10 years ago.
- that Christine said they were discussing the four corners where the light is with Cumberland Farms, UMIAK, ppl park on the UMIAK side in front of the building that is being renovated, the ask was whether lined parking could be done, she said there would need to be clearance for driveways and leaving it unstripped would actually allow for more parking to take place. Christine said that no parking spaces would be painted on Route 2.
- that Allen Knowles said the surface water where he is runs in such a way that curbs and drains are needed to manage it and commented that the paved sidewalks are just more parking spaces than sidewalks.
- that Bard said we could express our dissatisfaction of how this has played out in the last year or stop the process to deal with infrastructure needs. Christine said a written follow up to the Transportation Secretary with a CC to the meeting attendees and our representatives being clear about what the problems are was her suggestion. She said she has not seen any documentation about what was said before and what is happening now. Bard said Josh has the email that said wait for the plan and then another that said here’s the plan and now it’s too late to do anything about. Christine said we are dealing with change overs and having the documentation is needed. Bard said we have gotten caught up in their new process which has not worked very well. He thought there would be records since Josh started. David wanted to escalate the

message. June wanted to send the message that we want the job done but done right. Christine said if they decline that we could still stop the project to get it cued up properly.

A letter will be drafted and sent to the Transportation Secretary. Bard asked if we should include the Governor and Legislators. Christine said Legislators yes, the Governor, no. Bard said the Transportation Secretary may not care, David said it is the type of thing the Governor wants to hear about. David said the Governor wants to hear. Bard said we tried to meet with the Secretary three times, and he didn't show up when we finally got the meeting with him. Josh said the Transportation Secretary called to apologize and there was a brief conversation where he said his team would meet with us the next day but there has not been any follow up with him since then. June recommended that we follow up as requested and if nothing comes of it then go to the Governor. Christine said that conversations with our representative should also happen, they may go on our behalf to the Governor. June thought we should follow the chain of command. Bard disagreed, this is not a chain of command thing, the Transportation Secretary has not addressed our concerns, that frequently people go to the Governor, and it may go back down but it goes back with an admonition to get it resolved. June asked if waiting two weeks would it be reasonable to then go to the Governor. Bard said the Agency of Transportation has not met the towns expectations and going to the Gov would be beneficial. Bard suggested writing to the Transportation Secretary letting him know of our disappointments, what's been acceptable, and the stormwater issue that is caused by state roads adding it may delay the project.

- that the goal was to get it done right without killing the project
- that there would be two letters drafted, one sent to the Transportation Secretary, and one to the Governor that cc's the Transportation Secretary looking to get his support and the support of his administration for the project being done properly

d) Consideration of approval of amendments to financial policies

Connie reported:

- that June highlighted some items for discussion and others that needed more input

Josh reported:

- that the Bank Reconciliation Policy was changed to indicate statements being done monthly.

Discussion included:

- that Christine asked if there was a numbering system for the policies. Connie responded there was not.

Christine moved to adopt the Bank Reconciliation Policy; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Josh reported on the CC Policy and showed the track changes version of the proposed policy.

Christine moved to adopt the Credit Card Policy; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Josh reported on Drawdown & Reimbursement Request Policy changes

Discussion included:

- that June suggested looking at doing more electronic transfers, how we do them and why, Connie said everything still needs to be approved, with transfers we would also need to have controls in place that currently are not, our treasurer comes in and signs checks so that it is not me.

Christine moved to adopt the Grant Procurement Policy; David seconded.

Discussion included:

- that Connie reported on the Grant Procurement Policy saying that this policy would accompany the policies bulleted for a complete record
- that Christine said the bulleted items should reflect and match the actual policy titles
- that once corrected this will come back for approval

Josh reported on the Investment & Banking Policy

Christine moved to adopt the Investment & Banking Policy; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Connie reported that the Invoices Fiscal Year End Policy was written years ago, and the auditors said it could not be done the way it was, it now conforms with what the auditors want to see.

Christine moved to adopt the Invoices Fiscal Year End Policy; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Josh reported that these will also need to be adopted by the Water Sewer Commission

Christine moved to adopt the Warrant Emergency Transfer Policy; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Christine moved to adopt the Warrant General Policy as amended; David seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

More policies will be reviewed at the next meeting.

e) COVID

Bard reported:

- that there is a resurgence of COVID with the Delta variant. CDC guidance now says masks should be worn inside for Chittenden & Essex Counties based on spread. He said the Water Sewer Commission agreed masks should be worn inside at meetings, staff and visitors when in person and continue hybrid meetings. He said even when vaccinated people can be vectors of transmission for those with compromised immune systems or no vaccination.

Discussion included:

- that Christine asked if we are going to make a request for masks in the building. Josh said not yet, our resolution was to follow the state and it is the CDC guidance to mask indoors in Chittenden and Essex Counties of VT based on spread.

f) Review of fourth quarter FY21 financials

Due to time constraints this was moved to another meeting

g) Review of proposals to operate solid waste management transfer facility

Christine reported:

- CSWD and Cassella responded to the RFP and no decision would be made tonight
- that the criteria to make the decision and how bids would be evaluated would be discussed.
- that Cassella was willing to have a reuse zone, CSWD was not.
- that this was big decision

Discussion included:

- that June said CSWD would rent for \$1 but she did not see Casella's rental amount. Christine said it was not called out in Casella's response.
- that Bard's suggestion was to have a group that reviews the submissions and come back after setting scoring criteria
- that Bard said making sure the bids meet certain criteria should be part of the criteria
- that Bard said the \$1 indicates a landlord tenant agreement, it's not about the amount of money
- that Christine asked if the Selectboard should determine the criteria, or the committee could do that. Bard said a subcommittee could do it with oversight from the Selectboard or have the Town Manager create the criteria and come back to the Selectboard.
- that Sarah Reeves, from CSWD was willing to answer any questions or come back at another time. She said CSWD values their 25-year relationship with Richmond.
- that Christine asked Sarah Reeves, should Richmond go with another service provider what it would that mean to CSWD. Sarah Reeves said that the possibility of

loosing something that has been worked at for so many years is at stake, that the process was clear. and they would see where it landed. Bard said that having been involved with RFP's at the state level and if there is a problem the RFP could be withdrawn, selection criteria could be included and reissued. He was not sure it was a good idea, but he has seen it done. Christine said that because everything is public the spirit is to be sure we have a fair process.

- that Rod West said he was a proponent of seeing what could be done with the property and was impressed with Casella's reuse, he thought having later hours one day a week would work for people who work different hours. Rod West thought Casella's trying to be creative was impressive.

- that Michael Casella said Casella's believes great partnerships come from this type of endeavor and was willing to work with the Town and offer a different option. He said if there were any questions, they would be happy to answer them.

- that Christine said that a small committee would be put together to review the bids, criteria would be set, and this topic would be back at the next meeting with a recommendation the first meeting of Sept. Bard suggested Josh and a Selectboard member, June Heston and a community member do the reviews. Christine asked Rod West, who agreed to be on the committee.

h) Discussion of illuminated crosswalks

Ravi reported:

- that we have an illuminated sign and where to put it is the question
- that the packet had a map that indicated the possible locations
- that putting these signs at controlled intersections is not advised
- that putting too many together is not advised because it tends to create a situation where drivers do not alert to them
- that the two locations that would be advisable is near the Round Church or across from the Stone Corral
- that June said there are a number of people crossing to get to the parking lot, then we may want to look at putting one across from the market.
- that Ravi thought it could be tracked how many crossings there were using the lighted crosswalk
- that Bard said along Bridge Street is busy but there are already lighted cross walks. He said the Creamery intersection had cars turning in multiple directions with pedestrians doing the same. Ravi said that the Jolina Ct intersection is going to need a stop sign ultimately but didn't know when.
- that Christine said this was not a decision item for tonight, it was to remind us about the study and what best practices are.
- that Ann Naumann said she was concerned about the crosswalk that runs parallel to Bridge St. because there is not enough light. She wears a vest that flashes lights. She is concerned that this is an accident waiting to happen. Bard asked Ravi if there was another approach that could be taken for that intersection. Ravi said the fix would be to build a proper sidewalk with a visible path. Bard asked if a combination of a streetlight and better designated crosswalk would work. Ann Naumann said it is

really about vision and wondered about a barrier. Christine said this will need more discussion.

i) Discussion of decision-making process for Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Christine reported:

- that keeping the language clear is important
- that this will be a total of about \$400,000 split in 2 payments
- that setting priorities and criteria for worthy plans was necessary
- that Richmond has an abundance of committees could have those come with ideas for allocation of funds
- that there is a lot to learn on how to spend the money
- that ideas for spending the funds could be solicited while waiting for regulations

Discussion included:

- that Bard thought setting criteria about sustainability, have the spending be on something that has an impact, a capital investment, or positions us to reduce expenses, he wanted to be thoughtful about how the money would be spent
- that Connie thought there were several layers, saying the Town could take this as a revenue loss; what that meant to her was that should the Town choose that route, it would mean less reporting, another level she said was that there was money available at the County level that would be additional money. Connie felt it was important to remember this was about economic recovery, infrastructure, and Town Center maintenance repairs could be eligible. Christine said she was sure that as this unfolds more guidance would be available and information would be updated at each meeting.

j) Update on process to hire an Owners Representative for projects at the Town Center and Library buildings

Christine reported:

- that the RFP process was undertaken for projects at Town Center and the Library
- that the recommendation is APEX based on the interview process with the next step being having a contract drawn up with the terms still being determined

Discussion included:

- that the contract amount will be brought back

k) Update on process to revise the Traffic Ordinance

Josh reported:

- that this came up in the discussion on parking at Overrocker's Park
- that there is some draft language being reviewed by several committees

- that there are other changes being looked at and updates would be brought back at a future meeting

III. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes:

David moved to approve the Minutes of 7/19/2021; June seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, David, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Invoices and warrants:

David moved to approve the warrants as presented; June seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, David, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Purchase Orders:

David moved to approve PO 4152 to FW Whitcomb for Paving paid for by the Class 2 Roadway Grand in an amount not to exceed \$210,000.; June seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, June, David, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

June moved to amend PO 4007 by reducing it by \$35,000.; Christine seconded. Roll call vote: June, David, Bard, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Discussion included:

- that the \$35,000 that PO 4007 was being reduced by would be used as the matching funds for PO 4152.

David moved to approve PO 4153 to Richmond Rescue for the FY22 Appropriations in an amount not to exceed \$78,012.; Christine seconded. Roll Call Vote: Bard, June, David, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

IV. Discuss Items for Next Agenda

- FY21 financials
- financial policy reviews
- remainder of money 2500 VT youth program returned, request to have it applied to the related grant on community resiliency
- ARPA funds
- RFP transfer facility
- Route 2 letters
- tax sale
- owners rep contract
- status of gunfire in town
- status of work for class 4 road hearing

- update on Website RFP

V. Executive Session if necessary -none

VI. Adjourn

David moved to adjourn; Christine seconded. Roll call vote: David, Bard, June, and Christine voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

The meeting ended 10:32 PM