

# **Town of Richmond Selectboard Meeting**

## **Minutes of April 25, 2022**

**Members Present:** Bard Hill, David Sander, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, June Heston

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager; Connie Bona, Finance Director; Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Kyle Kapitanski, Police Chief; Pete Gosselin, Highway Foreman; Kendall Chamberlin, Water and Wastewater Superintendent; Rebecca Mueller, Richmond Free Librarian

**Others Present:** Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Allen Knowles, Chris Granda, Connie, Erin Wagg, Gabrielle, Jack Linn, Jason Barnard, Jon Kart, Kyle, Lauck Parke, Laurie Dana, Margaret, Martha Nye, Mary Houle, Patty Brushett, Raymond Wilson, Roger, Sarah K, Sheila Chamberland, Tom Frawley, Tracy Rosen, Virginia Clarke

**Call to Order: 7:00pm**

**Welcome by:** Heston

**Public Comment:**

Brushett: On Hinesburg Road there are two very sharp curves between Fay's Corner and Beaver Pond Road. There is no shoulder, no fog lines, with limited passing ability with the number of bikers and pedestrians. It has multiple accidents and is a very dangerous place. The speed limit changes from 35 to 45 mph. I think there should be a yellow caution sign to show the curve approaching. We need fog lines for pedestrians and bikes. We should fix the shoulders. There should be another speed study that focuses on these areas. Air brakes should not be used in Richmond. I have given a copy of this to Jeff Forward.

Houle: If the Right of Way is given to bicycles, then they need to be registered, inspected, insured, and licensed. If a bicycle causes an incident there is no way to track. Did the Selectboard know about the proposal of affordable housing during the site visit at Gateway on Saturday.

Furr: Gary Bressor presented a plan to the Planning Commission a few meetings ago on affordable housing. Many members are always talking about affordable housing, and it is an option we would like to explore. A private individual is able to discuss these items.

Hill: There is a benefit to affordable housing by having water and sewer extension going to the Gateway. These were conceptual conversations on affordable housing.

Forward: This is still a conceptual idea that the individual brought to the Planning Commission. It represents an idea that is out there and there is no current action for the Selectboard.

Houle: I was startled at the proposed cost for the hook up of water and sewer.

**Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:** None

**Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

## Consideration of accepting the Compensation Study

Skaggs: You should have a revised .pdf with the original comparables of 75 points or more. In some cases, it increased and in some cases it decreased. Grades 4-7 really didn't change at all. Grades 8, 9, 10 were lowered a little bit along with Grades 1, 2, 3. I will share my screen and walk through these Tables.

\*Table 1 is the same which shows internal equity. No changes here

\*Table 2 is a Comprehensive table that illustrates current and proposed salary ranges

\*Table 3 shows the proposed pay ranges with steps.

This salary data was collected in Dec./Jan., so we recommend adjusting ranges by CPI or my surveying Towns every year. You also have data sheets for each position. It also shows the original communities and then the ones from Chittenden County that were removed.

Furr: The people with CDL would begin at Grade D

Forward: Are these Tables based on Towns with 75+ points or more our size or close to us in Chittenden County?

Skaggs: Some are in Chittenden County, and some are not. We went back and added all Chittenden County shown at the bottom. The updated analysis only includes the 8 communities listed at the top (Berlin, Charlotte, Fairfax, Hinesburg, Jericho, Morristown, Northfield, Underhill)

Heston: There were 13 communities with 75+ points but the 8 shown are the ones that responded. Any suggestions on moving forward?

Mueller: I originally had issues with the comparables. There was only one other municipal library. I wonder about the numerical validity of the averages with such small sample sizes. It would be a mistake to not include our Chittenden County towns as they are our labor pool. In the last 10 years, I have lost 3 superlative individuals and have not found similar replacements. I think this requires further discussions. It is hard to find comparable data.

Kapitanski: This is Chief Kapitanski from the Police Department. I would like to echo the sentiment about the pool of data. Of the 8 communities surveyed, only 4 have a Police Department with only 3 responses. In a previous meeting, there was a comment that we are not comparable to South Burlington Police Department. The highest step for the proposed range is still about \$10,000 less than the current South Burlington Police Chief's salary. In perspective, the Corporals in South Burlington are more comparable to our Chief's salary.

Heston: How did you compare payrolls when you negotiated with the Union?

Kapitanski: The members of the Union negotiated that, and I am not sure how they did comparable salaries.

Hill: The Union representing the Police Officers presented comparable but did not use Burlington. We see people more mobile in the lower levels of the organization. The Water & Sewer Commission also discussed how inflation is significant and something we should contemplate. What is the impact of inflation as we look forward toward recruitment and retention? I observe the lower levels of organizations are increasing the salary required to attract employees.

Gosselin: Did the other Towns already adjust salary grids? Did the other Towns have retention issues?

Skaggs: We collect the current salary data which is why we recommend an annual survey for upcoming increases. This could be done before the new fiscal year.

Gosselin: Every town in Chittenden County has a lot of open vacancies including Burlington. I do not think the 50% will work for Highway. I have been 6 months with a vacancy. Bumping them up a little bit will not attract other employees with any experience. In Highway, we have competing employees which are at different steps. When we consider the CDL restrictions, it is driving up the cost even more. I have issues with the gradation for Highway Department.

Skaggs: We just look at the market data, but all clients are having troubles with recruitment and retention.

Bona: I still do not understand why we do not want to look at Chittenden County numbers. Most of our employees have a cost of living associated with Chittenden County. I have been watching the numbers over the last three years, we have lost a lot of well-trained employees from year to year. We need to be on the same level as everyone else. Plus, how much money do we want to keep putting into training people? Why do we want to steer away from the Chittenden County numbers?

Heston: We hired consultants to look at the data. This is a small State and when we look at Chittenden County, it is hard to compare what someone is being paid in Burlington, South Burlington, and Williston as the population, workload, and number of employees are different. It is important to look at the data in front of us which shows the market. To compare a Town that isn't operating on the same scale is not comparing apples to apples.

Gosselin: We are not comparing apples, we are comparing current salaries. The other towns area dealing with this too. This problem is everywhere, and we should not just make comparisons. We need to look at the private sector as they are adjusting to the demand. There is a work force decline going to the private sector.

Mueller: When I worked in larger organizations, I had a very specialized role. We have small departments, and each individual is required to learn a great deal of different roles and cannot be specialists. The individual in a small department has more responsibility than an individual in the larger departments.

Chamberlin: Since I have been here, this is the only time that you all have all Department heads orientated in the same direction. We are at a crossroads. We are losing the battle for personnel. The employees I am losing are leaving for less work and substantially more pay. The market is Chittenden County. You cannot compare us to Jericho when they do not have Water/Sewer or a Police Department. Richmond is a mini-Burlington. Hinesburg is the closest one to us. They are offering more than Richmond.

Heston: We have this information in front of us. We can make a motion tonight or discuss further.

Furr: The study does recommend an annual re-evaluation and further investigations. Going ahead a getting pay increases rolled out doesn't mean we cannot commence that process after July 1. We do expect to take a fresh look at this every year.

Heston: We have the data that is available and paid a lot of money for this Compensation Study. We need to make a decision on that data but can consider what the staff is saying. Or we can move forward with the consultant's information.

Arneson: More data is provided with a survey of existing Towns to gauge overall increases not necessarily individual jobs. We can look at the report that includes all Chittenden County towns and figure out where we want to be percentile wise. We can look at that just includes the 75+ point comparables for a 60-65%. We can look at different Towns for a different 50 point comparable.

Mueller: A lot of information was not collected from Libraries, so I had to contact them to find actual salaries. Maybe our departments reach out to similar departments in other Towns.

Bona: I suspect numbers will continue to go up as everybody will be competing. Once we make a decision, I need leeway to make those updates in payroll. If we increase the grid again on July 1, I will have to do the process again. This is a lot of work to do it twice over a few months.

Forward: If we vote to accept this study does that mean we immediately implement the recommendations.

Arneson: Yes, we would move forward if the Board makes a decision.

Hill: Are people clear on individual positions? We would want to look at this position by position for what the increases would mean for the budget.

Furr: The Water & Sewer Commission decided to step back and take a look at it position by position.

Bona: It will be about \$58 per service hour. For every hour of service between all employees it would be a about \$58 increase.

Hill: I would like to see the baseline pay/benefits currently compared to the new slotted proposal and the total annual cost. This still is too abstract.

Arneson: How would the Board like to look at that data next week? Do you want that data for both versions of the study or one of the other?

Heston: We should look at both side by side with the 50% and 65%.

Sander: Pete brought up a good point that the data looks at what is already done. I wonder if Department Heads could ask what other Towns are doing for retention to be more competitive.

Heston: I think that would ask too much of our staff. The data could be less reliable based on who the Department Heads talk to individually. This is what we paid a consultant to do.

Forward: I think we should table this issue until we collect more information.

Arneson: I think we can have that by next week's meeting.

**Public hearing for Zoning Changes. Town wide Wetlands, vehicle fueling station and non-conforming uses and structure**

*Sander moved to open the public hearing for the consideration to amend Richmond Zoning Regulations Sections 2.4.2, 3.3.2, 3.4.2, 3.5.2, 3.6.2, 3.7.2, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.13, 5.7.7, 5.10, 6.8.15, 6.9, 7, and Appendix A1. Forward seconded Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

Venkataraman: Planning Commission received request from the Richmond Mobil gas station to amend the regulations. The request was specific to wetlands regulations and non-conforming structures. The Commission realized changes needed to be made for the benefit of Mobil and other community members. The Commission took in a lot of input from a variety of community members as well as State wetlands ecologists. The regulations in front of you have been reviewed multiple times and represent over a year and half of work.

Hill: In regard to limiting gas stations, the current electrical grid cannot handle the number of electrical cars the government would like us to use. It is a comment based on the challenge we see in our future. I also question if the number of islands is controversial or not?

Venkataraman: There is a capacity to serve, and the Mobil owners are willing to invest in that connection so that there would be a DC Fast Charger.

Hill: My question is about the grid on the whole not just that specific station. There are parts of the State that are close to 100% carrying capacity. Is the limit of gas refueling islands a controversial decision?

Venkataraman: The Commission discussed whether to limit the number of islands in a gas station. We looked at nearby gas station regulations in Jericho, Williston, and other Towns. Virginia Clarke put together a slide show that illustrated the specifics of the gas stations along Rt 2. We decided limiting to 4 pump islands would best serve the community.

Hill: Was it controversial?

Granda: I am a member of the Planning Commission, and it was a lively discussion, but it was fully vetted.

Houle: We serve more than the community of Richmond. If we limit it because it serves Richmond, then we should think beyond that.

Granda: I am a consultant working on battery chargers of various classes including DC Fast Chargers. This is what the Zoning Commission is requiring under the changes. This is only about Richmond's regulations and is not Statewide. It applies only to fueling stations. We are currently at the bottom of the hockey stick. Electrical cars will suddenly become popular. An electric car is something you are seeing more in our areas. Why are DC Fast Chargers important? It is based on the time it takes to fuel up an electrical car. If you plug into a house outlet, then you get about 5 miles for every hour of charging. If you plug into a Level 2 charger, then you get 22 miles for every hour of charging. A DC Fast Charger gives you 180 miles for every hour of charging. For people to purchase electric vehicles, they need to be confident they have enough to get around. Currently, there are DC Fast Chargers in Burlington and Montpelier and nowhere in between.

Richmond gas station owners install a DC Fast Charger at a time of substantial renovation. We expect by 2030 that up to 25% of all vehicles in Richmond would be electrical. The DC Fast Chargers will provide a valuable service to those coming off the interstate as well as Richmond residents. DC Fast Chargers provide a backup from home charging as well as piece of mind. The estimated total amount of electricity consumed in 2020 Richmond is ~22,000,000 kWh or 5,500 kWh per person per year. A DC Fast Charger is rated at 50-350 kW. We estimate the amount of power consumption over the course of the year, used by 10 people every day to fully charge batteries would be about 21,000-22,000 kWh. That represents about 10% of Richmond's current consumption. We expect that to happen even with home charging. The electrical utilities used to assume a 6% increase in consumption per year up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The more electricity that gets sold, the more the utilities can invest in infrastructure. It is hard for me to understand how adding 3 DC Fast Chargers in Richmond in the next 5 years would pose a problem.

Clarke: The political question is to help move along the electrical transition which needs to be done at the same time. The Planning Commission feels we should move this along. How does this transition play out? We make the following recommendations:

\*4.13.2 is "All Vehicle Fueling Stations shall have one or more DC Fast Charger electric vehicle charging station(s) with a Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) Combined Charging System (CCS)."

\*A letter of denial of the required "Ability to Serve" Letter will constitute an exemption. VTrans, the Climate Caucus, Drive Electric Vermont have recommended putting in DC Fast Chargers. We are not doing something that is not being promoting. If we do not put pressure at the ground municipal level, then we will not get there.

Frawley: 95% of vehicles being sold this year are still internal combustion engines. I am concerned about municipalities forcing things to the consumers and alienating people driving past Richmond. I am also concerned about the 4 maximum islands because this is a safety concern due to the number of vehicles. I am one of the few operators to put in 2 DC Fast Chargers in White River Junction which averages 3 cars per day. The politics is way ahead of the science. The equipment is very expensive. It is about a 17-year return on investment for a small gas owner. The comments about the grid are real as it is long and expensive project. 86% of all electrons created in New England are with natural gas.

Hill: I am a fan of encouraging electrical vehicles. There are issues with battery capacity so maybe we wait for a technological breakthrough. I am a big fan of charging stations at Town Center and elsewhere. Sitting on the Regional Planning Commission, they have not planned 20 years out for what vehicles would need. There is a huge disconnect for the long-term plans for the grid and the vehicle demand. I don't think Richmond it will be an issue compared to the rest of the State. Is the 4-island pump limit to stop people from using gas fuel? How did we arrive at those numbers?

Clarke: Almost all fueling stations on Rt 2 are 4 islands or less. Most of those stations fit into that same mode. The traffic in the Mobil Station seems like it fits. There are issues with the neighboring wetlands. The Planning Commission thought more pumping stations were not safe enough.

Forward: Does this expansion fall under Act 250? Will Act 250 have any requirements associated with Level 3 charging stations?

Frawley: Yes, we will go through Act 250 process which does currently mandate any charging stations. We are voluntarily putting in those charging stations.

Clarke: It is pointless to have Level 2 chargers along the highway which are suitable for houses. It needs to be Level 3 chargers or nothing out by the highway.

Forward: The Mobil Station is an excellent location for a Level 3 charger. 80% or more of the charging occurs at home currently. This is on the radar of what is coming up. I represent the commercial sector and former board chair for Renewable energy Vermont. I have a few concerns. This is for all the fuel stations so it might limit any expansion. I am concerned about the Lucky Spot as this might discourage them to do any renovations. I am also concerned about the grid. I feel this is a State-wide planning issue. I am concerned with local planning coming with limited knowledge and expertise. We would be better served and addressed on a Statewide level.

Linn: Do the electrical vehicles pay taxes to support the roads? If I drive through the local trailer parks, I don't think you would find many electrical cars. I think you would close the Lucky Spot if required to put in a charger.

Houle: I am at my wit's end with non-conforming nonsense. I feel it is detrimental to be labeled as such: they were in compliance when they were constructed. Even with a Fast DC Charger, what do you do while you are waiting? The interstate caused the wetlands by the Mobil station. We used to have 6 gas stations in Richmond.

Clarke: Nobody is going to be forced to put in a DC Fast Charger. It will only come into play if they were planning a substantial renovation.

Forward: There was an amendment to 4.13.2 to include language relevant to the ability to serve letter for a DC Fast Charging Station. Do we need to amend that now?

Venkataraman: You can make those changes.

Clarke: I recommend an ability to serve letter from the electric utility will be required for installation. A letter of denial of the required ability to serve letter will constitute an exemption from this requirement.

Granda: Do utilities provide a letter to denial? Utilities might not provide a denial letter but under an obligation to serve offer additional costs to provide that service.

Heston: What do we do if we cannot get that type of letter?

Clarke: We may want to wait on voting until we have the answer to that question. We need to give people a way to be exempted from this. I would be willing to work on that.

Furr: Our next meeting is next Monday. I would like to table decision this until next week.

Sander: We can take action on this next week even with the slight change to 4.13.2.

Venkataraman: Correct.

*Forward moved to close the public hearing. Furr seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

Heston: The public hearing is closed, and we will take action on this topic next week.

## **Consideration of adopting the Local Emergency Management Plan**

Arneson: We had questions about the evacuation plans for CHMS and RES. Both CHMS and RES are designated as Red Cross shelters. We have an evacuation capacity for emergency day use and overnight emergency. Both those numbers went up.

Forward: A larger capacity in RES seems unlikely. CHMS is almost twice the size.

Arneson: These are the figures provided by the Red Cross. They plan to conduct an audit to update their numbers. We need to adopt the Management Plan by the end of April. I suggest we adopt as is and work on updating those numbers.

*Sander moved to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan. Furr seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

## **Consideration of approval of use of Town Center Fund for electrical engineering for smoke alarm system at Town Center**

Arneson: Town Center does not currently have an automatic alert fire alarm. Smoke alarms will be placed at key spots around the building. If one was triggered, then the rest would alarm and initiate the call box. They are aware we are considering major renovations, so this won't be a permanent fixture.

*Hill moved to approve the use of \$1,750 from the Town Center Reserve Fund for electrical engineering for smoke alarms in the Town Center. Sander seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

## **Consideration of approval of use of Town Center Fund for mold remediation at the Library**

Arneson: We found mold in the basement of the Library as previously discussed.

*Hill moved to approve the use of \$4,178.72 from Town Center Reserve Fund for mold remediation at the library. Selectboard would also like to thank David Healy for finding a better quote and contractor. Furr seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

## **Consideration of approving an access permit for Town Highway 27 also known as Legal Trail 2**

Heston: Town Highway has approved the permit on the condition that a culvert is not required as a high point in the road.

Barnard: I represent the landowner, Scott Strode, who purchased the property and we applied for the access permit. The previous landowner, Tracy Rosen, is also present. We would like to make a slight modification to the road access by sliding it to the north north-east from proposed location. It will provide distance from Mr. Rosen's current house and add a little more line of sight.

Hill: Would we need to change the paperwork for that change in location and Pete's approval?

Barnard: It is roughly 20-25 feet, so you won't notice it with the scale on the map.



Gosselin: I recommended this change as I proposed the same thing, but Mrs. Rosen was opposed to it due to a lilac bush. It will require a revised access permit. We should also look at how close you are getting to a road culvert. We would have to come back in the next week.

Heston: This is moved to next week's meeting.

Rosen: I can negotiate around the lilac bush.

### **Consideration of approval of a new road name for Town Highway 27 also known as Legal Trail 2**

Rosen: Scott and I are okay with Strode Farm Lane. I feel strongly about keeping our old address on 1498 Dugway Road.

*Sander moved to approve naming Town Highway 27, also known as Legal Trail 2, to Strode Farm Lane. Hill seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

### **Consideration of approving a grant application for Congressional Directed Spending for Town Center Renovations**

Forward: We submitted an application to Senator Leahy's office this year and increased it from last year's proposal. The good news is that it is a favorable project but might be too small for Leahy's last projects. They recommended doing a similar proposal to Senator Sanders office which would not endanger either proposal being approved.

*Hill moved to approve submitting an application for Congressionally Directed Spending for renovations to the Town Center and to name Town Manager Josh Arneson as the Grant Manager. Sander seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

### **Consideration of accepting an easement offer from VTrans for Rt. 2 Bridge Project**

Arneson: We looked at this a few meetings ago regarding moving Rt for the new bridge. The access easement regards the electrical wires going overhead. They will change the slope to the east of the entrance. There will be some temporary space to work for construction. The proposed amount of \$5,700 was based on a percentage of disruption. Do we accept that offer and have attorney review?

Hill: Before approval we should meet with VTrans about this easement and the other Rt 2 projects. Typically, it goes to the CCRPC but I think we should expediate the secondary elements that they declare out of scope of their Rt 2 paving. At the very least, we should have an attorney review before we approve.

Forward: With all the heavy equipment around we can take advantage of this process. I like raising all these issues and all related to Rt 2. The access to the Fire Station is terrible and would require moving quite a bit of earth.

Sander: We could never improve the entrance to the Fire Station due to the level of Rt 2. It warrants a conversation with the State to improve this situation.

Arneson: They are looking for an answer by July 21<sup>st</sup> and a public hearing for October 21<sup>st</sup>. We have a couple of months.

Gosselin: We should get our engineers together to kick the dirt with the Fire Chief. We should address entrance concerns. They will have thousands of yards of material. I am still sour about the RT paving process. I think it is warranted to kick the dirt with them.

Hill: Let's connect with VTrans and remind them how to expediate the paving process.

Gosselin: We have an elevation problem between the Richmond Animal Hospital to beyond the Fire Station. Can we bring this road up 8 feet and make a short run up to the Fire Station? The engineering part can come after we get our concerns out there.

Hill: Someone from Highway, Fire, Town Manager, and Selectboard should meet with VTrans.

### **Update on Highway Department summer work plan**

Heston: The information is in the Selectboard packet.

Gosselin: You can view projects listed month by month. It is very similar to previous years minus the Volunteers Green mowing. We are taking on some of these big construction projects in place of the mowing. We are still down 1 full time position. We will begin our 10-hour workday, Mon thru Thu.

Furr: When are we actually paving the Volunteers Green?

Gosselin: Late August, early September we will remove 2 inches of gravel and replace with 2 inches of pavement. We will prepare grade to provide better water flow.

Furr: What is the adjacent owner doing about their side of the parking lot.

Gosselin: I will keep them posted of our plans. Everyone wins on this one if they agree to go along.

Forward: There are many safety concerns on Hinesburg Rd. Some of these issues might be long term. Signage might be a shorter-term solution. How often do we do the striping of the roads?

Gosselin: It is done once a year by the State in the Fall. Or it can cost us about \$0.30 per foot.

Forward: How about the fog lines? When can we discuss those types of things?

Gosselin: It is up to the Selectboard to make that decision and consider the money involved. I have my own opinion about signs.

Hill: We need some preparation in advance to get those on a future agenda. The Volunteers Green paving will improve with parking markings and traffic flow, correct?

Gosselin: Absolutely, there will be controlled parking with lines, marked handicapped spots, it will be a major improvement.

Sander: The concrete bridge on Hinesburg Rd is going to need replacement too.

Houle: My concern about parking is also considering the 4 spaces that flank the road going down to the ball field. The memo that Jeff Forward has also lists the concerns about air brakes.

Gosselin: Engine brakes are what we are talking about, and it is not often restricted in rural areas.

### **Update on Lake Iroquois Recreation District**

Heston: Moved to next week so Jack Linn could join.

### **Update on discussions regarding Fire Department governance**

Arneson: Essentially, a year ago, the Fire Department was updating their bylaws. They wanted to clarify around if they are a Town Department, an independent department, how do their volunteers follow guidelines regarding training and fire calls. We talked with our attorney and received guidance that currently it operates as a hybrid. Some of the times it operates as Town Department but other times it operates like an independent entity like Richmond Rescue. This isn't unusual in Vermont. The attorney recommends that we pick one or the other. The Fire Department would still like to write their own by-laws. Jay Furr and Christine Werneke had some conversations with the Fire Department.

Furr: The Fire Department would not consider the Richmond Rescue model. They could not make it work financially. Likewise, they want to control their members and elect their own officers. The lawyer has serious concerns about what would happen if the Chief disagreed with an advisory group. They would be fine with being a Town Department if they could still control the members of their personnel.

Heston: Based on the attorney's recommendation, the decision is to be a department if they cannot function as a non-profit. The by-laws can be addressed by having a standard operating procedure for hiring and firing.

Furr: It is letting members vote for personnel instead of top down.

Heston: That is a concern with the risk of discrimination. They need to follow our HR procedures by what the Town policy states. The attorney is advising we do not do it as a hybrid as there are a lot of legal cracks.

Forward: I would like to hear from members of the Fire Department. I would like to try to find a middle ground.

Hill: Would Jeff and Jay be willing to meet with the Fire Department and bring back information to us?

Heston: That sounds like a good plan.

### **Review of quarterly financial report**

Heston: I was not able to do a thorough review. I would like to postpone until next week.

### **Staffing update**

Arneson: This is an overview of what changed in the last quarter since January 1<sup>st</sup>. Duncan Wardwell is the new Assistant to the Town Manager. Highway still has a full-

time driver and heavy equipment operator open. Police has 1 full-time position and 3 part-time positions. The Library is still looking to hire someone for 20-24 hours per week but cannot find the right skill set. Tyler Machia is the new Zoning Administrator beginning April 1. Water & Sewer hired Steven Cote beginning March 31.

### **Discussion of next steps regarding the Rt. 2 repaving project**

Heston: We talked about combining this with the bridge project. We had a meeting with Senator Chittenden, Rep. Brown, Josh, Pete, and I. We have done a lot of negotiation and think it is a good idea to put this together to discuss with VTrans.

Hill: I think we should have this discussion to prepare for paving. We should also have Ravi reach out to CCRPC about getting things in cue for UPWP the vehicle by which those projects would be funded. We do not wait another year to get started.

Heston: Josh can you reach out to schedule this meeting?

Arneson: I will schedule the meeting at the Fire Station to look at the Rt 2 projects

Hill: We should invite a CCRPC member to the meeting as well.

Forward: Senator Chittenden as well.

Gosselin: Did we investigate other options regarding the shoulder widths, skipping the Village until we get the whole thing? The bids are already out. One thought was stop at the Bridge and then come back the next time to finish it up.

Kart: This is the only chance to do right by Rt 2 for the next 50 years. We do not need to rush for the offer they keep asking us to approve.

Forward: My concern about skipping the Village is they won't come back for a long time.

Hill: Most of the time we push back, they have given us more incrementally. We contemplated the unusual circumstance of fixing a shoulder problem they ignored the first time.

Gosselin: It is the wrong way to do a road construction project. The Senator asked me what I thought it would cost to replace those concrete retaining walls. These things can happen, but they never included it in the scope of their work. If we green light their original plans, I do not see them coming back.

Hill: We need to tell them we want you to do it right the first time.

Gosselin: I do not know why they never considered the shoulder work.

Heston: We won't know until we have the next meeting.

Knowles: I appreciate your efforts as I ride my bike along Rt 2.

Hill: We need another meeting to address why it makes no sense to us and you didn't listen to us the first time.

Forward: When is this scheduled to begin?

Gosselin: They are currently replacing all the culverts under 3-foot diameter between Bolton and Richmond. We do not have clear directions or plans from VTrans. This will be bigger than the Rt 117 project. They are going to excavate about 18 inches of the road right out. Then they will bring in new material, compact in place, re-grade and shape. Rt 2 will become a gravel road for several months before it gets paved.

Kart: More than a dozen years ago, we were discussing this with VTrans. They changed their process after they lost our previous plans.

### **Update on changes to the education tax**

Arneson: This is an update from the School Board as it affects the taxes in Richmond. This could increase educational taxes from 13-15.9%.

Heston: Is there any action we can take?

Arneson: I am not sure if the Selectboard can. I know the School Board is aware of it.

Forward: This is currently in play. Jana Brown is involved as part of the Education Committee

Hill: Let's invite Jana Brown to the VTrans meeting as well.

### **Quarterly update from Richmond Rescue**

Heston: This is a brief update.

Hill: It is really cool to have Richmond Rescue. Their performance looks really good. It doesn't happen without effort.

Forward: It says they contract out to Hinesburg. I think Hinesburg voted to have a Rescue budget at last Town Meeting.

Hill: The purchasing of the ambulance is just one part of it.

### **Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**

*Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 4/4/22 as written. Forward seconded.  
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

#### **Purchase Orders**

*Furr moved to approve the PO# 4337 to People's United Bank in the amount of \$7,046.00. Hill seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

*Furr moved to approve PO# 4367 to Recordsforce in the amount of \$12,925.00. Hill seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

Forward: I recommend that we digitize all our plans for all our buildings.

#### **Warrants**

*Hill moved to approve Warrants as presented. Sander seconded.*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

### **Discuss Items for Next Agenda**

- \_Lake Iroquois Recreation District
- \_Financial/compensation review
- \_Property re-appraisal
- \_Zoning changes
- \_VTrans updates
- \_Access permit for TH27
- \_Highway policy via Transportation Committee

### **Adjournment**

*Hill moved to adjourn. Sander seconded*

*Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved*

### **Meeting adjourned at 10:29 pm**

#### **Chat file from Zoom:**

00:33:28 Rebecca Mueller: Per Kapitanski's comment - there were also non replies from indicated towns, bringing the n down even more.

02:08:24 Chris Granda: Thanks everyone, goodnight!

02:26:00 TRACY ROSEN: Thanks Folks

03:11:03 jon.kart: And Senator Chittenden

03:14:37 jon.kart: The sidewalks are being installed by the town.

03:15:36 jon.kart: VTrans won't delay it too long because it needs to maintain Rt 2 as a safe highway

03:17:50 jon.kart: VTrans is currently awash in federal infrastructure funds, so it can't claim it's not financially feasible.