

R I C H M O N D S E L E C T B O A R D
R E G U L A R M E E T I N G
A u g u s t 2 0 , 2 0 1 2 M I N U T E S

Members Present: Chris Granda, Chair, June Heston, Vice Chair; Amy Lord; Ashley Lucht
Absent: Neil Boyden
Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Administrator; Marie Thomas; Mary Houle;
Linda Parent; James Garris; Bob Heiser; Jon Kart; Wright Preston;
Cathleen Gent; Christy Witters; Mark Fausel; and Ruth Miller was
present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Chair Granda called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Public Comment

Chair Granda asked if there was any comment from the public.

Mary Houle said that the Women's Run was being held on August 25th. She had asked for a live phone number to call if there were problems, and that no flyers be placed in mailboxes. Neither had been provided. The Administrator said he would obtain a phone number and speak to the Green Mountain Athletic Association about this.

Natural Resources Inventory - Jon Kart

Mr. Kart explained that he was seeking a preliminary approval to prepare two grant applications: one for the ECOS grant and a second Municipal Planning Grant, to develop a natural resource inventory of the town and associated by-laws to protect these resources. The grants would fund an assessment of wildlife, wetlands and endangered species. The Planning Commission has also suggested this be done and that the by-laws be developed. Mr. Kart added that this might be a multi-town project if Bolton or Huntington would want to participate.

Ms. Lucht asked if the Agency of Natural Resources does this now? Mr. Kart said yes but on a larger scale and is not as useful to us as the proposed grant project would be. The grant project would be much more specific.

The Conservation Commission had written a letter of support for the grant.

Ms. Lucht asked if the final product could be shared with the State, and Mr. Kart said yes.

Ms. Lord suggested other towns would participate, and Mr. Kart said that the ECOS grant in particular was more likely to be funded if multiple towns applied.

Ms. Heston asked when the application deadline was and Mr. Kart said September 28th. Ms. Heston asked if there was time to complete the inventory between the time of award, in December, and the end of the grant? Mr. Kart provided a timeline that would last approximately one year.

Ms. Lucht asked if anyone would be hired on this grant, and Mr. Kart said he would like to hire a consultant to do the inventory, such as the Vermont Natural Resource Council. They were on retainer with the Regional Planning Commission, and could be available.

Chair Granda said that only \$280,000 was available, and was anyone else submitting?

1 Ms. Lucht said that bicycle racks were one of the items that could be funded also.

2
3 Mr. Kart said there were a variety of elements under the broader grant, and VYCC may also want to
4 explore this.

5
6 Marie Thomas felt this was a great idea, but said that the by-laws would be challenging. She asked if
7 the Town Plan was being rewritten, and it was, and said that this should be a part of it and the high
8 priority areas should be identified.

9
10 Mary Houle said that private property owners would need to give permission for the inventory to take
11 place, and Mr. Kart agreed that was the case.

12
13 Ms. Heston said that the Selectboard should give this a nod and authorize Mr. Kart to develop a grant
14 application, and the Selectboard concurred.

15
16 Conservation Reserve Fund Request: Andrews Farm Conservation

17
18 Bob Heisen of the Vermont Land Trust was present with Jennifer Gilligan and Amelia Wagner, two of
19 the sisters who currently own the farm. The other two sisters, Catherine Couture and Abigail Allard,
20 were not present but supported the plan presented.

21
22 Mr. Heisen explained the project which was to purchase the development rights to 184 acres of the
23 farm, with those lands being able to be sold to a farmer at a reduced price. The remainder of the farm
24 was not included in this transaction. The sisters wanted to sell the property, but preserve it as a farm.
25 The project would be sold in stages, with the four acre "farmstead" around the barn first, and the
26 remaining lands later. The Vermont Land Trust was seeking a match from the Richmond
27 Conservation Reserve Fund of \$10,000.

28
29 Ms. Lucht asked if the cost to purchase the development rights only was \$200,000 and Mr. Heisen
30 said that was correct.

31
32 Ms. Lord asked what the future plans would be for the property. Mr. Heisler said that the land was
33 free to be sold, but would have restrictions. This would include a clause that gave the Vermont Land
34 Trust an option to buy the property at the agricultural value first, should the owners decide not to keep
35 the land a farm.

36
37 Chris Granda asked if a portion of this was in the floodplain, and if the value took that into
38 consideration. Mr. Heisler said yes, the utility of the floodplain land was taken into consideration by
39 the appraiser.

40
41 The Administrator asked if the farm could be further subdivided, and Mr. Heisen said no, it would
42 have to all be sold as one parcel. The Vermont Land Trust would need to approve any subdivision,
43 and they weren't likely to support it since the land couldn't support two farm operations.

44
45 Ms. Lucht asked if this included the riparian area, and Mr. Heisen said yes. Mr. Heisen added that
46 there was the possibility of developing a farmstead home and farmhand housing on the four acre
47 farmstead parcel.

48
49 Wright Preston said that the Conservation Commission supported this purchase.

50

1 Ms. Lord offered a motion to approve the contribution of \$10,000 from the Richmond Conservation
2 Reserve Fund to the Vermont Land Trust for the purchase of development rights to the Andrews Farm
3 and was seconded by Ms. Heston. The motion carried 4-0.

4
5 Emergency Management Planning Committee - Marie Thomas and Linda Parent

6
7 Marie Thomas explained that back in May, she, Linda Parent and the Administrator attended a FEMA
8 training course on Mass Care for individuals in a disaster. There was a need to develop a formal Mass
9 Care plan as well as an emergency action plan and update the response plan. She wanted to develop a
10 committee to create these documents, and she and Moe Forcier had already volunteered to be on the
11 new committee, and she was recruiting more members. She suggested members of the police
12 department, fire department, schools, town clerk, water department, planning and more.

13
14 Ms. Heston suggested putting an advertisement in the Times Ink!

15
16 Chris Granda said the town was lucky to have this training, and the town needed plans and good
17 emergency management.

18
19 Ms. Lucht said that she had looked at other federal and FEMA templates, which didn't seem to fit
20 small rural communities. Ms. Thomas said that Vermont Emergency Management's templates might
21 fit better.

22
23 Ms. Lord suggested someone from Esplanade Street might want to serve on this committee.

24
25 Cara LaBounty thanked the town for the training, and said it would be of great value to the town and a
26 template for future training. She agreed the town needed to develop plans so people knew who to call
27 and what to do.

28
29 Mary Houle said that her mother was a civil defense coordinator for many years, and the town needed
30 to have some self-reliance and the federal government would do nothing.

31
32 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to appoint Marie Thomas and Moe Forcier to the Emergency Management
33 Planning Committee and begin to put together a team to develop various plans and was seconded by
34 Ms. Lord and the motion carried 4-0.

35
36 Chair Granda requested a report on the progress at the first Selectboard meeting in November.

37
38 Our Community Cares Camp Update - Marie Thomas and Linda Parent

39
40 Marie Thomas explained what the Our Community Cares Camp was, and how it grew from a summer
41 food camp in 2009 to its own 501(c)3 and now serves breakfast and lunch each day to children at a
42 summer camp. This summer there were 75 kids in the camp, plus meals were served to other children
43 in school activities as well. The Town provides storage for the camp as a partner. This year's
44 Cardboard Arcade was a big hit. Ms. Thomas thanked everyone involved in making this year's camp a
45 success. The Selectboard agreed that the OCCC was doing well and that Richmond was lucky to have
46 it, and thanked Ms. Thomas for creating it.

47
48
49 **2. Other Business**

50

1 Invoice Audit - Eric Robinson

2
3 Chair Granda explained that this project was to look at the past eighteen months of accounts payable
4 invoicing to determine where our weaknesses were and what problems we needed to correct. Eric
5 Robinson was an intern hired to complete the project, and his draft report was being reviewed and
6 would be made public after any revisions at the next meeting of September 4th.

7
8 Mr. Robinson explained that he went through eighteen months of checks and invoices to determine
9 certain deficiencies or errors in the categories of taxes on invoices, improper documentation, double
10 payments and late charges.

11
12 On the sales tax issue, the most common cause of payment was on reimbursements to town employees
13 for small purchases. Sovernet, the town's long distance reseller, was in need of clarification.

14
15 For double payments, most occurred due to payment of statements and invoices. The recommended
16 action was to only pay one or the other. Some double payments were due to balance forwards being
17 authorized, and late bill processing due to missed payable periods or other reasons. Some payments
18 had been recovered, but some credits existed that the town could claim.

19
20 Mr. Robinson added that the missed payable periods were most common with Water and Sewer,
21 leading to late payments and late charges, and balance forward problems.

22
23 Ms. Heston asked about the Bridge Street Cafe reimbursements, and asked if towns were exempt from
24 meals and room taxes and Mr. Robinson said we were exempt.[Note: Vermont municipalities are
25 NOT exempt from meals and rooms taxes]

26
27 Chair Granda thanked Mr. Robinson for his work and said that he went through every single
28 transaction and did a fine job identifying our outstanding issues. The Administrator agreed and
29 thanked Mr. Robinson for helping us, and identifying ways to improve our accounts payable process.

30
31 Financial Reports

32
33 The Administrator explained that the Finance Director had prepared the budget to actual for the year
34 ended June 30th, as well as an updated budget status for June 30th and July 31st - the first of the new
35 fiscal year. He expected a trial balance to be developed by the end of the week, and the audit to
36 commence in September. The draft audit report was anticipated to be available to the Selectboard in
37 October. There was discussion on the reports. The Administrator was directed to investigate the
38 Richmond Village Housing line, and why nothing was shown as revenue in that line.

39
40 Chair Granda said he wished to see a short cover memo on the fiscal year end budget to actual
41 explaining variances of more than \$25,000 in each category.

42
43 Ms. Lucht asked to see an updated debt schedule for the next meeting.

44
45 Public Hearing Notice on Hazard Mitigation Buyout

46
47 Cara LaBounty asked to speak about the Houle buyout, and Chair Granda allowed her comments.

48
49 Ms. LaBounty said that Bolton had been moving forward with their buyout, that she was assisting
50 them with, while Richmond was scheduling a hearing for the 27th. She asked for questions to be

1 provided ahead of time so she could answer them. She talked briefly about the buyouts in general
2 around the state, and said that if the Selectboard wanted answers, the clock was ticking on her ability
3 to provide them.

4
5 Chair Granda asked Ms. Lord if she had questions and if she could meet with him on Wednesday
6 morning, and Ms. Lord said that she would have questions provided to her by the public finalized by
7 the close of business on Wednesday.

8
9 The hearing was to be held on August 27th at 7pm in the Library.

10 11 Hot Dog Cart Request

12
13 The Administrator explained that a Peter Booth and Amy Barton of Jericho had requested that they be
14 allowed to have a hotdog cart in the Volunteers Green at certain times as a way to provide a supportive
15 work arrangement for their special needs son. He would not conflict with other events that also sold
16 concessions or food items.

17
18 Ms. Lucht asked what other towns did in this case? Did they need health licenses and other licenses?
19 The Administrator said they would have to be licensed by the health department.

20
21 Chair Granda suggested a contingent approval on the ability to actually allow this. He asked if there
22 was a concern with precedent.

23
24 Ms. Lucht said that in Cathleen Gent's memo she said that there was no allowance for a fast food
25 restaurant in that district and it might be in the floodplain. Chair Granda said that they might need
26 Development Review Board approval for a mobile food vendor.

27
28 Ms. Heston felt this would set a precedent, and last year they rejected a canoe business because they
29 did not want that in the park.

30
31 The Selectboard asked the Administrator to further review this and see if this was possible within our
32 current regulations.

33 34 Depot Street Parking - Amy Lord

35
36 Ms. Lord said that the Economic Development Committee had developed a priority to get the Depot
37 Street parking area completed next year. This would also include a replacement of the waterline there,
38 but the parking was sorely needed.

39
40 Ms. Heston asked if this would include a transit option. There was some discussion on this, but the
41 Selectboard could see the need to get something developed at that location.

42 43 Vactor

44
45 The Administrator explained that following the last meeting, Jim Pease was able to reduce the grant
46 match from 20% to 10%, thus cutting in half what the town would need to contribute. The town's new
47 share of the match was \$3,906.25. This would reduce the town's commitment, and also make the
48 payback time three years instead of eight.

49

1 Ms. Heston asked about the maintenance hours. Ms. Lucht explained that these were estimates used to
2 develop costs for the year but were variable and dependent on experience.

3
4 Ms. Heston offered a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding dated September 2012 for
5 the Vactor Consortium and was seconded by Ms. Lucht and the motion carried 4-0.

6 Approval of Minutes of July 16, 2012

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8
9 Ms. Heston offered a motion to approve the minutes of July 16, 2012 and was seconded by Ms. Lord
10 and the motion carried 3-0-1 with Ms. Lucht abstaining.

11 Approval of Minutes of August 6, 2012

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13
14 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the minutes of August 6, 2012 with minor edits and was
15 seconded by Ms. Heston and the motion carried 3-0-1 with Chair Granda abstaining.

16 **3. Reports from Selectboard and Town Administrator**

17
18
19 The Administrator reported that he needed to move forward with heat for the Fire Department and
20 Town Center. There was discussion on this, and how much it would cost and the timing.

21
22 Chair Granda asked for an updated spreadsheet on facilities energy usage.

23 Palmer, Massachusetts Rail Station

24
25
26 The Administrator explained that a resident of Palmer, Massachusetts was trying to establish a rail
27 station there, and was trying to sell the idea regionally by promoting an interconnection of several rail
28 lines, including Amtrak's Vermonter line. He was asking all towns along the various rail lines that
29 would connect in Palmer to sign a resolution of support for the idea.

30
31 Ms. Heston asked why Richmond should support this, and Ms. Lucht said that now it is a hub with no
32 connections, and this would increase connectivity even for those on the Vermonter line.

33
34 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to sign the resolution of support for the Palmer, Massachusetts rail station
35 plan and was seconded by Ms. Heston. The motion carried 4-0.

36
37 The Administrator reported on several upcoming meetings, including the public hearing on the zoning
38 and subdivision regulations for August 20th and the public hearing on the hazard mitigation buyout on
39 August 27th.

40
41 The Administrator also reported that the Peet family was finalizing a subdivision off of Jericho Road,
42 behind Joan Avenue. There would be a walking path that was approved, and proposed to the
43 Selectboard for ownership. Residents of Joan Avenue may not realize there would be a walking path
44 created if this subdivision was finalized and he asked Danny Peet to notify those residents of this.

45 Warrants

46
47
48 Chair Granda spoke about the process of approving warrants. The Water Commissioners had agreed
49 to have two members review the warrants in advance of the meeting, and the rest would accept their
50 recommendations. He asked if the Selectboard could function this way also. Ms. Lucht was

1 supportive of this idea. Individual members were still free to ask questions in the meeting. It was
2 agreed that this could be done.

3
4 The Administrator asked if the Selectboard would consider Todd Chagnon's invoice, that was not paid
5 by the Water Commissioners yet, due to poor timing of submission and the lack of a quorum of Water
6 Commissioners at the last Selectboard meeting. Ms. Lucht said that the warrant had been warned on
7 that agenda but not this one. No one was comfortable approving the warrant at this time.

8
9 Chair Granda asked for an executive session to discuss personnel matters. Ms. Heston offered a
10 motion to enter executive session at 9:30 pm to discuss personnel matters, and was seconded by Ms.
11 Lord and the motion carried 4-0.

12
13 At 10:05 Ms. Lucht offered a motion to adjourn executive session and reconvene the regular session
14 and was seconded by Ms. Heston and the motion carried 4-0.

15

16 **4. Adjourn**

17 Motion by Ms. Lucht to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Heston. So voted.