

**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  
J u l y   7 ,   2 0 1 4   M I N U T E S**

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Members Present: Taylor Yeates; Chris Granda; Bard Hill; Ashley Lucht; David Sander  
 Absent: None  
 Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Michael Parent; Bill Parent; Jim Donovan, Broadreach; Bryan Davis, CCRPC; Mary Houle; Harold Irish; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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Taylor Yeates called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**1. Welcome and Public Comment**

Mr. Yeates asked if there was any comment from the public for items not on the agenda. Mr. Yeates thanked the Parade Committee and said their hard work was much appreciated this year. He also thanked everyone who helped after the winds, and who cleaned up afterwards.

Mary Houle noted that Mr. Yeates responded as a member of Richmond Rescue to an incident that day. Ms. Houle then passed around an item that explained under Vermont law that for a five-member board, three affirmative votes was the minimum required to approve an action.

**2. Items for Presentation: Route 2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Study**

Jim Donovan of Broadreach Consulting was present to explain the final findings on the Route 2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Study. Mr. Donovan thanked Stantec and the Regional Planning Commission for their help with the study and steering committee. Mr. Donovan explained the alternatives as he proceeded through the presentation. There were no significant changes from the last presentation but some details were now finalized in the report. The railroad wasn't interested in cooperating and the cemetery was off-limits which made getting people down the road from the village difficult. The final alternative was to have five foot bike lanes on each side of Route 2 which would occur when the major reconstruction of the road took place in 2016.

Mr. Yeates asked about the width of the bike lanes. Mr. Donovan said that a four foot minimum was recommended but VTrans wasn't sure they could get that consistently through this area. A five foot lane was typical.

Mr. Granda spoke about the costs and said that it may be less expensive to have a shuttle. Ms. Lucht agreed that the value of this project was in question and asked how would it be used?

There was some additional discussion on lane widths and ADA requirements. Mr. Donovan said that the project was now in the hands of the decision makers. Mr. Yeates thanked Mr. Donovan and the members of the steering committee for their work.

**3. Other Business**

VYCC Cleanup Grant

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The Manager explained that VYCC had made a request for one 30-yard dumpster from the Community Cleanup Fund at Chittenden Solid Waste District. This was carried over from the last meeting, and the fund now had \$4,821.88 and this request would be for about \$700.

Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the request from VYCC for one 30-yard dumpster from the Community Cleanup Fund and was seconded by Mr. Granda.

Maureen Kangley reiterated that she felt that VYCC was not being a good neighbor with the taxation exemption and request for refunds.

The motion carried 5-0.

Cell Tower Update

The Manager reported that this week the technical hearing for the Public Service Board on the SBA Towers/VTel application would be held. He would serve as the town’s sole witness, and other parties would provide witnesses also. The objection was narrowly tailored on the town’s zoning bylaws and town plan.

The Manager then reported that the Public Service Board had not yet made a determination on the AT&T Jericho Road tower, and no further information was available on any other towers.

Open Public Meetings Policy

The Manager explained that Act 143 had modified the Open Public Meetings laws in ways that would impact Richmond, however, Richmond would be able to comply with the new law. The Manager had developed a policy to implement certain sections, in particular naming locations to post agendas and meeting notices, posting of draft minutes online, and notification of special meetings. The provisions in the law on executive sessions are being followed now and should not need any change in practice by the town’s boards and committees.

The Manager noted that the new law also carries a \$500 penalty for violating the meetings provisions, but not the posting of minutes.

There was some discussion of the policy. Ms. Lucht offered a motion to approve the Open Public Meetings Policy as written and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Granda noted this should be sent to all town committee members.

FY2015 Tax Rate

The Manager explained that the Selectboard should set the municipal tax rate, while the educational tax rate was set by the State. The new municipal rate was .6377 and the Homestead education rate would be 1.5334 and the non-residential education rate would be 1.5470. The Manager noted that the Grand List value had increased slightly from what was anticipated at Town Meeting and the tax rate was slightly lower than what was expected.

1 There was some discussion on the education rate and how that is determined. The Manager provided  
2 some explanation, however, the calculations were not easily deciphered. Ms. Lucht offered a motion  
3 to approve the municipal tax rate at \$0.6377 and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried  
4 5-0.

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6 The Manager noted that there was no one to be considered for the DRB appointment.

### 7 8 Financial Reports

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10 The Manager provided a brief explanation of the budget status and tax collections. It appeared on a  
11 preliminary basis that the current year collections were down by \$107,000 which was about 3.5% of  
12 total municipal collections which was in line with recent years. The final numbers would be available  
13 in September. There was some additional discussion on budget status.

### 14 15 Appointment of Clare Rock as Acting Zoning Administrative Officer

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17 The Manager explained that in the past, the former Town Planner had also served as the Acting  
18 Zoning Administrative Officer. Since the ZAO was a part-time position and the Town Planner  
19 became a full time position, the Town Planner often approved permits when the ZAO was not in the  
20 office. The town really needed another person to approve permits when the ZAO was away. The new  
21 Town Planner, Clare Rock, had agreed to be appointed, however, only when the ZAO was on vacation  
22 or ill and not as a routine course of business. The zoning by-laws had this as a Selectboard  
23 appointment.

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25 Mr. Granda offered a motion to appoint Clare Rock as Acting Zoning Administrative Officer as  
26 outlined by the Town Manager and was seconded by Mr. Hill and the motion carried 5-0.

### 27 28 Richmond Village Housing Limited Partnership Loan Deferral

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30 The Manager noted that this was an outstanding issue and there had been a couple of recent meetings  
31 that provided some new information. Additionally, Wright Preston had written a memo on his  
32 analysis of the most recent audit and concluded that the operation was in fact a cash-negative  
33 operation and in fact servicing their other debt was becoming an issue for them. The State's Housing  
34 and Conservation Board had indicated that Richmond was the beneficiary of a variety of housing and  
35 conservation monies and that this outstanding loan was becoming an issue for them. Therefore this  
36 issue was back on the agenda for discussion.

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38 Mr. Yeates explained that he and Mr. Granda had met with Representative Anne O'Brien and Amy  
39 Wright about this issue and they discussed the financial concerns with the project.

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41 Mr. Granda said he and Bard Hill had attended a second meeting with staff from the Vermont Housing  
42 and Conservation Board and discussed the town's needs and past projects, both housing and  
43 conservation, with them. These staff members were concerned about Richmond's goals and noted  
44 many recent conservation awards but no activity in the housing area. They also noted that the  
45 Richmond Village Housing Limited Partnership project wasn't as financially stable as they had hoped  
46 in 1998. They felt that it would be an extreme burden to force the repayment and that deferrals were  
47 acceptable to them.

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49 Mr. Hill explained Mr. Preston's financial analysis and how there was no easy solution to their  
50 financial problems. There was additional Selectboard discussion.

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2 Mary Houle said that June Heston and Fran Thomas had wanted to continue to be involved in this  
3 process and did anyone reach out to them. Mr. Yeates said he had not reached out to either of them.  
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5 Mary Houle suggested they be brought in for assistance and we needed more information. She was  
6 concerned we might have a lawsuit, and urged the Selectboard to not allow a 15-year deferral.  
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8 There was some additional discussion. Ms. Lucht offered a motion to defer the repayment of the  
9 original loan and to-date accrued interest for an additional 15 years, with no further interest and was  
10 seconded by Mr. Granda.  
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12 Mr. Sander said he felt maybe a five year deferral was ok, but he didn't want this to be a forgotten  
13 issue. There may be better times ahead and we needed a balanced look.  
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15 Mr. Yeates said we needed to continue to support affordable housing in Richmond. The motion  
16 carried 3-1-1 with Mr. Sander voting against and Mr. Hill abstaining.  
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### 18 Redevelopment Issues

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20 The Manager explained that the Senior Center group was rethinking their role in the redevelopment of  
21 the creamery parcel. The Manager suggested that a town-sponsored redevelopment corporation might  
22 be an alternative to pick up this role.  
23

24 Mr. Granda said that we had changed the zoning, but the owner's price had not changed and remains a  
25 barrier. We need to persuade the owner to do a cost-benefit analysis and increase the carrying cost of  
26 doing nothing.  
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28 Mr. Yeates felt that a cooling off period is here and more action will happen shortly. Ms. Luchts noted  
29 that if we eliminate the brownfields then that issue will be gone.  
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31 Mary Houle asked if we had more interest in affordable housing. Mr. Yeates said we had heard of one  
32 plan before. Barre had layered buildings with retail on the bottom and mixed housing in upper floors.  
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34 Mr. Hill suggested we solicit interest from Champlain Housing Trust.  
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36 Maureen Kangley objected to a bully approach with the owner.  
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38 There was some additional discussion. Mr. Granda wanted to schedule a date for a "summit" meeting  
39 on this issue.  
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### 41 Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

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43 The Manager noted the Department Reports, Works in Progress and Highway construction updates.  
44 The Manager noted that the Livak sand pit was bought by GW Tatro and would soon come in for an  
45 Act 250 amendment and site plan to start work.  
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47 The Manager said that a request was made in writing from the Richmond Community Band for the  
48 lapsed payment from FY2012. There was some discussion, and the Selectboard agreed to overextend  
49 the FY2015 budget line to provide for the lapsed payment.  
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1 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve a \$400 payment to the Richmond Community Band for FY2012,  
2 using the FY2015 budget line, and was seconded by Mr. Granda. The motion carried 4-1 with Ms.  
3 Lucht voting against.

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5 Mary Houle requested a report from VYCC on what assistance or work they provided the town last  
6 year.

#### 7 Approvals

#### 8 Minutes of June 16, 2014

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12 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve the Minutes of June 16, 2014 and was seconded by Mr. Sander  
13 and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Granda abstaining.

14 The Manager presented three purchase orders for the Highway Department.

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17 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 2386 to Hinesburg Sand and Gravel for winter  
18 sand in the amount of \$47,995.20. Mr. Granda seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

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20 Mr. Granda offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 2387 to Hinesburg Sand and Gravel for  
21 highway gravel in the amount of \$23,991.80 and was seconded by Mr. Hill and the motion carried 5-0.

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23 Mr. Hill offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 2389 to All States Asphalt for calcium chloride  
24 in the amount of \$10,000 and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried 5-0.

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26 At 9:00 PM Ms. Lucht had to leave the meeting.

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28 Warrants were approved.

#### 29 Executive Session

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32 Mr. Hill offered a motion to enter executive session at 9:05 pm to discuss the Town Manager's  
33 evaluation and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried 4-0.

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35 Mr. Hill offered a motion to adjourn the executive session and reconvene the regular session at 9:08  
36 pm and was seconded by Mr. Sander and the motion carried 4-0.

#### 37 **4. Adjourn**

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39 Motion by Mr. Granda to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hill. So voted.