

**RICHMOND WATER AND SEWER
COMMISSION MEETING
January 3, 2017 MINUTES**

Members Present: Bard Hill, Chair; David Sander, Vice Chair; Lincoln Bressor; Fran Huntoon; Bob Reap

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources; Kevin Camara, Green Mountain Engineering; Cathleen Gent; Maureen Kangley; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Joy Reap; Bob Stafford; and Ruth Miller was present from MMCTV to tape the meeting.

Mr. Hill called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Hill asked if there was any public comment.

Cathleen Gent talked about the West Main project and said that the public engagement hasn't been sufficient to inform everyone of where the Water Commission was. She asked for additional information sessions and a formal public involvement phase, maybe a session now on where the project is, and to get feedback from the public.

Mr. Bressor said he felt that 95% of the system users were unaware that the Commissioners had applied for the loan. The vote on the bond was very close. Mr. Sander said he heard Mr. Bressor, and we haven't had a discussion on moving forward due to the uncertainty of the federal funding – we need a viable plan and seek feedback. Things were fluid and evolving, still.

Mr. Reap said we had been on this project for over two years, and the people have had the opportunity to talk about it but no plans have been developed on exactly how this is moving forward. He didn't feel that people had no opportunity to understand the project, but we should work on what we want to show the public now.

Ms. Huntoon agreed, we should show people what's going on.

Maureen Kangley pointed out the special meeting to answer questions on the first commitment letter, and only one person came. She asked how could we convince people to come to more meetings?

Mr. Hill and Mr. Bressor discussed a public participation plan. Mr. Bressor suggested more detailed front porch forum posts, and more detail on agendas. He also wanted to avoid more sudden, "we have to approve X now" meetings. Mr. Hill suggested a joint meeting with the Water Commission and Town Plan committee.

West Main Street & USDA Update

The Manager explained the special meeting on December 27th to approve an interlocal agreement regarding the extension to the mobile home park. The Water Commissioners approved the document, which was submitted to USDA the next day. On December 29th the Manager signed the application in Montpelier, and USDA approved the request for 100% loan on the project. The Manager had provided the Commissioners with the conditional approval letters from USDA.

1 Some discussion arose around if the town was prohibited from applying for the grant/loan
2 combination now that the loan-only was possible. Mr. Chamberlin said that USDA has said that it
3 was unlikely that we would have gotten a grant large enough to off-set the higher interest later in the
4 year under a grant/loan combination. The question arose, have interest rates on the loan gone up
5 since the beginning of the year?
6

7 The board discussed the issue, and wanted to see an update posted to the website, front porch
8 forum, with the letters, interlocal agreement, Preliminary Engineering Report and other information
9 provided online. The board also wanted to know if it was possible to apply for the grant/loan
10 combination still, and have a joint session with the Planning Commission on the future of the
11 Gateway.
12

13 Mr. Bressor and Mr. Reap agreed to work on a subcommittee with staff on updating the costs of the
14 project and how that would translate into a rate structure for the expansion area. On the next
15 meeting, the board would discuss the PER from Green Mountain Engineering and use of the town's
16 excess capacity.
17

18 Fire Protection Fees Discussion

19
20 Mr. Chamberlin explained his rationale for pricing the Fire Protection fee charged to the General Fund
21 budget. He said that with 5% of the costs of the fire department to be charged to the taxpayers that
22 was a reasonable standard for the fee. In prior years, the former fire chief had suggested that the fire
23 department used roughly 16,700 gallons of water per month to fight fires. This was roughly 5% of the
24 water used annually by the system. This cost was about \$250 per month at the time, and the
25 suggestion now is to add about \$964 to that cost to offset the debt on the new tank. The coming debt
26 on the water storage tank would be partially offset by the incoming fees, thus sharing the costs
27 between providing water and providing fire protection – both of which the tank was designed to do.
28

29 Mr. Chamberlin also spoke about coming development at the creamery site, and perhaps a new fee
30 for sprinklers which avoided allocation charges. The Commissioners agreed to have a more in depth
31 discussion on this topic at a later time.
32

33 Superintendent's Report

34
35 Mr. Chamberlin explained that parking at the wastewater treatment facility was an issue. With the
36 new traffic patterns for Volunteers Green, people who use the park year-round are parking at the new
37 gate, blocking the turnaround for septage trucks. The Water Commission recognized this, and
38 agreed to have the Selectboard discussion possible remedies, and year-round use of the park. Mr.
39 Chamberlin also requested a Facebook page, to send out information. The Manager cautioned him
40 about having someone to maintain the page, because there was no one in administration available to
41 do it.
42

43 Approval of Warrants

44
45 The warrant was reviewed and approved.
46

47 There was discussion about the Desroches purchase order. The Manager explained that this was
48 already approved last June.
49

50 Adjourn

51
52 Mr. Sander offered a motion to adjourn at 7:00 pm and was seconded by Mr. Bressor. So voted.