

**RICHMOND WATER AND SEWER  
COMMISSION MEETING  
September 5, 2017 MINUTES**

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources; Rod West; Peter Mumford; and Ruth Miller was present from MMCTV to tape the meeting.

Ms. Huntoon called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Welcome and Public Comment**

Ms. Huntoon asked for any public comment but there was none.

Water Tank Update

The Manager explained that there had not been word from SD Ireland yet, but that Alan Huizenga had written them a note about scheduling. The failed plantings were discussed, and the Manager mentioned that he had received a complaint about the planting scheme not being identical to what was approved by the DRB.

Mr. Chamberlin noted that plantings did need to be replaced, however, he cautioned against very large trees since the engineers had explained to him that on the slope down from the tank the stability was critical. He didn't want trees that were either too tall or too heavy, although some smaller trees could be added. The existing vegetation was important so that the slope stayed firm, so that roots held and weren't too shaded.

West Main Utility Discussion

The Manager explained that at the last meeting, he was asked to provide a little more information on a Water-Only project to Phase 2. He felt more detailed analysis could be extrapolated from the existing report, however, there is no goal that we're negotiating to. The costs as represented in the updated report were found to be unacceptable, and he was willing to go out on a limb and say that adding in the full debt cost for Phase 1 will not improve the outlook. The issue was and is subsidy – without it there won't be broad support for any utility extension and considering a heavy hand approach one has to ask what the motivation is.

Water Only Costs: Phase 1, Phase 2

Phase 1 Water Construction Costs =	\$234,000
Phase 2 Water Construction Costs =	\$302,000

9 Residential connections  
3 Commercial connections

On a flatly apportioned basis, 10 properties owe \$536,000, or \$53,600 per property.

1 Costs to each connection vary, based on use, and debt is apportioned accordingly. This debt can  
2 reasonably be amortized over 40 years to lower payments, however, the max on the State loans is 30  
3 years and without Phase 3 the USDA funding is unavailable. One common way to handle this is to  
4 place liens on the property so that upon change of ownership the full debt liability apportioned for that  
5 property is paid off. Theoretically that cost is passed on to the purchaser and represents an investment  
6 that is returned through the quality the public water service provides. This obviously only makes  
7 sense if the development is able to take advantage of that quality service – an underutilized property  
8 won't provide an adequate return on that investment, making that investment less likely to occur.

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10 The online engineering report can be found here:

11  
12 [http://www.richmondvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/West-Main-Preliminary-Engineering-  
13 Report-12-23-2016.pdf](http://www.richmondvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/West-Main-Preliminary-Engineering-Report-12-23-2016.pdf)

14  
15 He thought the only way to know if we have support for this is to hold another meeting with property  
16 owners, and see what it is they really want, what they believe that would do for them, and how far they  
17 would be willing to go to pay for any service, be it water, sewer, or both.

18  
19 Rod West, a resident from the Gateway, said that he and his neighbors were still interested. He asked  
20 the board to reconsider the project and go as far as the Mobil station. He discussed several scenarios  
21 in which the project might work, and suggested sending out a design build RFP for this area (Phases 1  
22 and 2).

23  
24 Mr. Hill said we should revisit what we did before and why. He asked why did we start at the school?  
25 Mr. Chamberlin said it was a shorter distance to Phase 1 than going down West Main to that point.  
26 Also, the costs were assumed to be less if you installed water and sewer lines together, at the same  
27 time, than if you did separate routes for each.

28  
29 Mr. Hill also said we have some economic feasibility questions on this project that weren't answered.

30  
31 Peter Mumford, also a property owner in this area, asked why can't our engineer take what had been  
32 done and modify it more reasonably. He spoke more and said overall he looked forward to keeping  
33 this project alive.

34  
35 Mr. Reap agreed we should put out an RFP for design build, since most contractors that did this type  
36 of work would already have an in house design engineer.

37  
38 Mr. West asked how much per foot to install pipe? There was some discussion about pipe installation,  
39 pipe sizing, etc. and how large the service needs to be.

40  
41 Mr. Bressor said that when the town sent out commitment letters, no one would commit to the pricing.  
42 Ms. Huntoon asked if we were shooting ourselves in the foot by not sizing for expansion. There was  
43 discussion on these points.

44  
45 Mr. Chamberlin suggested we ask them to examine all three phases and provide pricing for each  
46 phase. Mr. Hill suggested it be scalable for future expansion.

47  
48 There was additional discussion on moving forward with a design build RFP. Mr. Hill offered a  
49 motion to have the Manager and Mr. Chamberlin draft a design-build RFP for the West Main  
50 extension, to Phase 3. Mr. Sander seconded the motion.

1  
2 Mr. Bressor clarified he did not want any additional funding allocated for this project – no review by  
3 the engineer or other work that would expend funds beyond staff time. The Manager said he would  
4 have something to look at for the next meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

5  
6 Capital Plan Review

7  
8 The board briefly reviewed this. Mr. Chamberlin recommended that Jolina Court be removed and add  
9 the Bridge crossing, the Bridge Street work, and well rehab and riprap work.

10  
11 Approval of Warrants

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13 The warrant was approved.

14  
15 Items for discussion at the next meeting, start at 5:30:

16 West Main Utility Extension – design build RFP  
17 Water Tank Update

18  
19 Adjourn

20  
21 Mr. Sander offered a motion to adjourn at 6:55 pm and was seconded by Mr. Hill. So voted.