

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
February 5, 2018 MINUTES**

Members Present: Bard Hill; Stephen Ackerman; Jon Kart; Steve May; David Sander; Stephen Ackerman

Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; Ian Bender; Peter Gosselin, Highway Foreman; Angelike Contis, MMCTV; Michael Monte, Champlain Housing Trust; Guy Roberts, Conservation; Judy Rosovsky, Conservation; Bob Heiser, Vermont Land Trust; Harold Irish; Russ Clark, Clark’s Truck Center; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Bard Hill called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Hill asked if there were any comments from the public, but there were none.

2. Items for Discussion with Those Present

Mount Mansfield Community Television – Government Channel

Angelike Contis of MMCTV announced that in mid-March their second and third channels would debut, with one being devoted to broadcasting governmental meetings, with about 1/3 of the time devoted to Richmond. The station upgraded their broadcast server at a cost of over \$40,000 to be able to do this. She also suggested that we consider some changes to the room setup to make it more television friendly. The Selectboard thanked Ms. Contis for her presentation and looked forward to the new channel.

Champlain Housing Trust

Michael Monte of the Champlain Housing Trust was present to request a mortgage subordination for their new TD Bank loan which would be used to make repairs and improvements to the Borden Street housing. There was also a change in corporate structure, allowing Housing Vermont to withdraw as the project general partner. Mr. Monte said this was typical following a 15-year involvement. For background, Richmond had partnered with Champlain Housing Trust about 20 years ago to construct the Borden Street apartments, called the Richmond Village Housing Limited Partnership. The town obtained from the State of Vermont a \$300,000 federal loan for the project. The project was to repay the loan, but obtained a deferral of repayment in 2014 and no additional interest. The outstanding principal and interest would still be due the Town of Richmond in 2029 – to be used as the seed money for a revolving loan fund for HUD eligible projects.

There was some question and answer regarding the partnership and the repairs. Mr. Ackerman offered a motion to approve the consent of assignment to allow Housing Vermont to withdraw, and appointing Champlain Housing Ventures to take their place. Mr. Kart seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

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2 Mr. May asked a few questions about the consent to refinance, and subordinate the town's lien. There
3 was some additional discussion about the mechanics of the refinance. Mr. Kart offered a motion to
4 approve the consent to refinance and was seconded by Mr. Ackerman. The motion carried 5-0.

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6 Telephone Service Comparison

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8 The Manager explained that due to some confusion over taxes and fees, the comparison was not yet
9 ready and should be rescheduled to the next meeting.

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11 Highway Truck Advance Purchase

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13 Highway Foreman Peter Gosselin was present to explain his plan to replace a highway truck in the
14 next fiscal year. Mr. Gosselin explained that Clark's Trucking held a State contract for the type of
15 truck chassis that they were replacing, and they planned to utilize Viking Cives for the plow and body
16 – which also held a state contract. Clark's had a chassis available now, and expected the plow and
17 body to be ready in four months. Mr. Gosselin explained that he would like to contract for this now, in
18 advance of the start of the fiscal year, and take delivery in July when the town was able to pay through
19 the budget.

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21 Mr. May asked if there was a compelling interest to act now. Mr. Gosselin explained that with the
22 vehicle being built now, the delivery would be sooner and cause no delays in work in the next year.

23
24 Russ Clark explained that if the town agreed to reserve the truck now, but the truck was not funded at
25 Town Meeting, the contract would be canceled at no cost to the town. The Manager requested that
26 this be added to the contract.

27
28 There was discussion of timing, warranties, and other items. Ultimately, the board agreed to proceed.
29 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the pre-order of an International tandem dump truck from
30 Clarks, with plow and body from Viking Cives, in an amount not to exceed \$157,213. Mr. May
31 seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

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33 Andrews Forest – Draft Interim Management Plan

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35 Guy Roberts was present to explain the draft management plan. Mr. Roberts was a Conservation
36 Commission member who was the lead on the interim management plan committee for the Andrews
37 Forest. He presented the plan, and reviewed the sections with the Selectboard. He paid particular
38 attention to the list of prohibited activities under the Interim plan, which most would likely be lifted
39 following the adoption of the permanent plan. It was explained that having such a plan was a
40 requirement of the US Forest Service "Town Forest" grant, and the plan also had to be in line with the
41 VLT conservation easement over the property.

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43 The Selectboard agreed that the draft plan was in accordance with what they would like to see, and
44 encouraged the steering committee to keep up the good work.

45
46 The Manager asked Bob Heiser of Vermont Lan Trust to explain an easement issue with Vermont
47 Electric Coop. Mr. Heiser explained that VELCO held a right of passage across the property to access
48 their lines, which run through the center of the property. The easement was in an indefinite location,
49 but recently VELCO requested to use the old forest road that utilizes the current entrance to the
50 property. He and others, including the Town Manager were to meet with VELCO later in February to

1 look at the issue, however, they may have the right to enter here. The road they would require would
2 be substantial and somewhat disruptive in the short term. The Selectboard thanked Mr. Heiser for the
3 information and would consider the issue at a later time.

4 5 **3. Other Business**

6 Personnel Policies Discussion

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9 The Manager explained that the wage scale and pay range policies were ready for adoption. He
10 explained that these had been reviewed earlier and except for the Police policies, they were ready for
11 the board to consider for adoption.

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13 Some of the policies were reviewed. It was pointed out that one edit to the Library policy was
14 required. Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve and adopt the salary wage scale/grid and the pay
15 scale and promotion policies for the Administration/Finance/Clerk; Highway; Library; Planning and
16 Water Resources. Mr. May seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

17 18 **Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager**

- 19
20 1) The Manager noted the police report.
21 2) Works in Progress & Calendar – the Manager noted that this was being developed and
22 improved. Mr. Hill requested a more in depth discussion at the next meeting.
23 3) Cote Tax Appeal: The Manager explained that two years ago, Phil Cote appealed the valuation
24 of some property he owned on Christmas Hill. He first appealed his revised assessment from
25 the Assessors, and then the BCA raised his value. This was appealed to the State Property
26 Valuation, who have lowed his valuation by \$45,000 – in effect, a win for Mr. Cote. I am not
27 terribly concerned as most of the property is in Current Use and the amount of local revenue
28 lost is minimal. We will however have to eat the \$2,000 due the schools for the prior two tax
29 years. I see no significant impact to our current year revenue outlook because of this decision.
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31 The Manager also noted that Cara LaBounty had handed him a note from her sister, Angela
32 Cote. The Manager read the note aloud where Ms. Cote criticized the assessors for their
33 mistakes in the valuation and objected to the Selectboard's lack of involvement in the case.
34 Cara LaBounty echoed these sentiments and requested that NEMRC personnel – Ed Clodfelter
35 and Lisa Truchon, come to a meeting and explain what happened. She also requested a
36 different assessor for the town. She requested that NEMRC also publish the full property card
37 for each parcel as it would be more convenient for the public.
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39 Mary Houle also said that this detailed property record card is important.

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41 Mr. Hill agreed that the assessor should come in to talk about this appeal.
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- 43 4) Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) & Storm Water Master Plan (SWMP): The
44 Manager had been reporting the MRGP has been approved by the State and we have less than
45 two years to apply and obtain the local permit. Fortunately for us, the Regional Planning
46 Commission is working to get all their towns permitted and in compliance – this is an ongoing
47 project that is on schedule. The SWMP was presented at a meeting on January 31st, and
48 includes a number of identifiable projects that will improve storm water management and
49 treatment in town. While the plan is not final and we still need to identify the six most viable
50 project options, it is important to continue the conversation at our meetings.

- 1 5) SSTA Rate Increases: The Special Services Transportation Agency is a federal grant managed
2 by Green Mountain Transit, and offers subsidized rides for Elderly and Disabled residents. The
3 grant has been modified, and rates are going up according to the enclosed sheet. The Manager
4 suggested we consider modifying our policies to allow medical trips only, and end the social
5 and work trips. In the future, he saw our grant share being reduced since there are other major
6 players with higher unmet need than Richmond, and limiting trips is the best way for us to
7 manage the program unless we wish to pay a higher percentage of the ride cost through higher
8 budget allocations.
- 9 6) Town Plan: The Planning Commission continues to work on revisions and is planning on
10 having a public-ready final by May. This puts the town on schedule for a November adoption.
11 PLEASE NOTE: While we have no active Town Plan, zoning amendments are not possible,
12 nor is having a Capital Plan. The reason we haven't adopted one is because there is no legal
13 authority for an official Capital Plan without a Town Plan. We are however, keeping it up to
14 date with current decisions.
- 15 7) Winter Road Budget: We are about ½ through our winter road maintenance budget, with two
16 tough months left in the season. Pete Gosselin noted that if February had as much ice as
17 January, he'd be before the board in March to request additional salt and sand funding.
- 18 8) West Main Utility Extension: The West Main extension is up for discussion at the earlier
19 Water Commission meeting. Due to costs exceeding the budget and the discouragement of the
20 property owners in the Gateway, the Water Commission rejected the design/build bids.

21 Approvals

22 Buttermilk – Request for Amendment of VCDP Grant

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24 The Manager explained that the Buttermilk project was requesting an additional \$100,000 from
25 VCDP. It was likely that this would be approved by VCDP – but the grant is an award with the Town.
26 The Manager noted the progress report from Josi Kytle – and Mr. Hill read some highlights. He
27 requested Buttermilk to come back in April for an update.
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31 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the amendment to the existing Vermont Community
32 Development Program block grant in the amount of \$100,000. Mr. May seconded the motion, and the
33 motion carried 5-0.
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35 Approval of Minutes

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37 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the minutes of January 16, 2018 and was seconded by Mr.
38 May. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Kart abstaining.
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40 Mr. Ackerman offered a motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2018 and was seconded by Mr.
41 May. The motion carried 3-0-2 with Mr. May and Mr. Kart abstaining.
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43 Next agenda: Town Meeting, Facilities Plan update; Library Presentation of 5-year plan, and the
44 assessment discussion.
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46 Approval of Warrants

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48 Warrants were reviewed and approved.
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50 **4. Adjourn**

1 Motion by Mr. Sander to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Ackerman. So voted.