

**RICHMOND SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
June 4, 2018 MINUTES**

Members Present: Bard Hill; David Sander; Stephen Ackerman; Roger Brown; Christy Witters

Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

Bard Hill called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

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

2. Other Business

Discussion of Police Services:

Bolton Coverage Contract

The Manager explained that in April of 2017 we entered a contract to provide 12 hours of traffic coverage per month for Bolton, at an “overtime rate” of \$45 per hour. This contract expires at the end of June. He had reached out to Bolton to see if they were interested in a renewal, and they are. In fact, they may be interested in other police coverage beyond traffic patrol, however, that is up in the air. David Sander and the Manager met with Josh Arneson of Bolton’s Selectboard earlier this week to discuss a new contract. The Bolton Selectboard is aware of our ongoing discussions about the future of Richmond’s policing, and the chief’s retirement.

There are two issues that concern Richmond: first is the rate, which has been much debated. Our current “overtime rate” just covers an officer, some vehicle costs and a small administrative fee – we don’t make much money and Bolton keeps the ticket revenue. Late last year we analyzed our “full-cost, per-hour” rate which is about \$65 per hour. Bolton understands this concern and noted that this would not be competitive with the Chittenden County Sheriff, however, they prefer Richmond if we cost something less than \$65.

The second issue is the ability of Richmond to honor the contract due to personnel leaving the department. The contract has been purely overtime-based – either before or after an officer’s shift, or on a weekend, etc. Theoretically we could provide OT coverage to Bolton even with a reduced force, without sacrificing the core coverage that we establish for Richmond under such conditions. By this, the Manager meant that with three officers remaining on the force after July, we’ll cut shifts because we cannot provide the same level of coverage that we could with five officers. With OT being surplus to the normal shift, we could still provide something to Bolton. He suggested the board consider why we would do this, or how hard we want to push this onto the remaining three officers. Those are the basic concerns. If the Selectboard is willing to discuss and answer these questions, we could complete a second contract with Bolton. The alternative is to say that we are not comfortable with the contract at this time, and Bolton could pursue another arrangement.

1 There was discussion about the town's overtime rate, the full rate that included all overhead costs,
2 which was estimated at \$65 per hour. The Sheriff would charge Bolton \$50 per hour.

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4 Mr. Hill advocated a rate that captured the complete cost of providing services, but recognized the
5 issue for Bolton would be whether the new rate was too expensive to continue.

6
7 Mr. Brown wondered that as the department changed over the next year if the officers would be too
8 stressed to do this overtime work. Mr. Hill asked if there was any interest in the department
9 continuing to do this coverage. Mr. Brown felt it wasn't necessary to do this at this time.

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11 Ms. Witters also agreed that covering costs was important, but that this might be too high for Bolton.
12 If we lost more than two officers, this contract may be too much for the department.

13
14 It was agreed that that Manager would reach out to the department to see if there was any interest in
15 continuing, and find out what Jericho pays for State Police patrol.

16 17 18 **Interim Police Chief**

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20 The Manager had received six resumes and two more inquiries into our interim chief vacancy. He
21 distributed these to the review team and we'll meet/discuss and select several to speak with next week.
22 He was pleased with the response so far and was confident that we'll be able to move forward with a
23 successful candidate before the end of June.

24 25 26 **Police Services – Ongoing Discussions**

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28 Ms. Witters and Mr. Brown met with the public on May 29th for the first listening session. The police
29 department was represented, and we learned much about how the department functioned. The overall
30 tenor of the meeting was positive, although the public indicated they wanted to understand more about
31 coverage, response, the nature and volume of issues handled by the police and how that has changed
32 over time. There is quite a volume of data to compile, examine, and present. Tim Scanlon assisted in
33 an internship role to be able to tackle this.

34
35 As this process continues to take shape, the Manager envisioned a process where we are able to
36 display a range of services and demands to get an understanding of the productivity of the department
37 over time, and tie that to budget approvals. Based on this, the public should be able to decide how
38 productive they want the department to be, and what the associated cost might be. Other questions
39 such as should we be the ones providing the service, or contract with another agency, or – as the
40 question is still open – is the service worth any cost at all, will be a little more difficult to answer.

41
42 We need to continue to develop an outreach program, with surveys, events, etc. We did a good job
43 with the Town Plan a few years ago and we could copy some of those techniques. Again, this will
44 take planning from a number of different volunteers to be able to handle both the style and format as
45 well as the back end logistics. This is where public interaction in committee-type assignments could
46 work well.

47
48 Mr. Brown reviewed the session and felt it was good, but not as productive as it could have been. It
49 provided an understanding of what happens during an officer's shift and what to plan for the next
50 session.

1 Ms. Witters agreed it was good to have a few officers present to explain what they did, but she wanted
2 to now hear more from the public. We needed to reach out to get a broad consensus on policing.

3
4 Mr. Brown added that we needed to present what services we provide at what cost and make choices
5 based on that.

6
7 Mr. Hill said he had heard the concerns from the public not knowing what we had. The issue was not
8 too much nor too little policing and that was difficult to answer, but we needed to keep in mind that a
9 new building was a key issue.

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11 At that meeting, the discussion on a second meeting was for June 12th, although Mr. Brown and Ms.
12 Witters agreed that this should be moved to another date and it was decided that the 14th of June would
13 work better.

14 **Legislative Update**

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17 The Manager explained that back in January, Representative Marcia Gardner met with us to discuss
18 several bills pending in the legislature that would have effected either our operations or Richmond
19 residents. The Manager recently met with her again for an update, some of which has been published
20 in the Times Ink, but is worth of note for our meeting.

21
22 S. 273 would have affected local policing in several ways, including limiting State Police contracts
23 and mandating a local emergency services plan that would detail how a town would provide certain
24 services, including police services. It has been sort of watered down and there are no longer
25 restrictions on contracting with the State Police but does call for a report on calls to the VSP to be the
26 basis of a later report and assessment.

27
28 Regional dispatch in Chittenden County will move forward with the towns who voted it in, although it
29 will be created through paperwork outside of the legislative process. In other areas, comprehensive
30 planning for similar districts will be mandated. It would likely be two years, or longer, before any new
31 regional dispatch operation is available to Richmond (keep in mind that Shelburne continues to
32 contract with us for fire and rescue).

33
34 S. 97 would have replaced paper public notices with electronic ones. This bill never made it out of
35 committee, however, the concept may be reworked next year.

36
37 The bill to create a per-parcel fee for clean water – primarily Lake Champlain – did not make it. This,
38 too, may come back next year, as a funding source for lake cleanup needs to be identified to satisfy
39 some of our settlement requirements with the federal EPA. There is a Clean Water Board that has
40 been created and tasked with developing a funding source.

41 **Fraud Policy Review**

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44 The Manager explained that this was a list of issues that would be addressed by the audit team, and
45 that they recommended the Selectboard review and sign that they have reviewed them. These don't
46 indicate that fraud is taking place, but point out areas where fraud is likely to occur. Based on these
47 items, the Selectboard can create new internal policies to address weaknesses.

48
49 Mr. Ackerman offered a motion to approve the Fraud Policy and was seconded by Mr. Sander. The
50 motion carried 5-0.

Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

The Manager noted the Police Report.

Works in Progress & Calendar – Please Review and we should have a brief discussion for planning of future sessions.

Rivershore Update: The Manager submitted an application to the Conservation Commission, which meets next on June 12th. He had a schedule conflict that evening due to the Police Services meeting, so someone will need to cover the Conservation Commission meeting. The application is for partial coverage of construction costs, so the balance will need to be developed somehow.

CBD Food Products: Canabidiol, known as CBD, is an unregulated substance derived from hemp plants – as you probably know, they are in the same family as marijuana. CBD, however, is supposed to have a negligible amount of THC and is not considered to be a regulated drug. While hemp production is licensed in Vermont, and is now (since 2016) allowed federally, CBD has been touted as a hemp product that has relaxation qualities. For that reason, it is popping up more and more as an additive in foods and drinks. Recently, the Richmond Farmers Market was approached by someone who wanted to sell CBD products. First, CBD is new and people are unfamiliar with the laws surrounding its use, but in this case it was rejected by the RFM due to it not being sold by the producer as a Vermont ag product. But this issue will continue to come up, and he suspected the public may have something to say about allowing it on public property. It seems to me that this is just another additive, like coconut oil or similar things, that isn't illegal and probably doesn't do much for you. Whether or not we have controversy locally remains to be seen.

July 4th – the new folks on the committee have really been working hard to get things lined up this year. I think this year will have one of the best parades and picnics in a long time.

Windstorm Damage: The October wind storm is wrapping up. Our total claim was just over \$10,000 and has been approved. FEMA will be forwarding 75% of our claim within a month and the State's share will be collected towards the end of the claim cycle – several months from now. Still no declaration on the flooding from May 4th, however the State intends to seek one from the feds.

Water Tank Demolition: the contractor has been notified to proceed with demolition of the steel tank. Route 2 Culvert Replacement: J Hutchins will proceed with this the weekend of June 15th. We'll be notifying everyone about the disruption, but the job should be done in two days. J Hutchins believes they can accomplish this without a total closure, however, it remains an option for them. Mr. Hill requested a press release on this as well as guardrail replacements.

Email Update: This has been delayed primarily due to the inability of email domain hosting to split between two usage types. Water Resources has been using the .gov email for a few years, and is being hosted with G Suite – managed by SimpleRoute. This costs \$50 per account per year, which isn't extreme, but our end goal is to provide all employees and volunteer boards with an email address. Using a subscription service like G Suite would cost almost \$3,000 in annual fees, which we do not currently budget for. So the free solution is GoDaddy hosting the smtp type email similar to what Green Mountain Access does for us currently. This has gone on for a long time, but the switchover will happen. We're working on a stop-gap for Water Resources that allows them access to cloud services outside of the .gov email. Earlier this evening the Water Commission agreed that staff should keep the .gov email and appointees and elected officials would get a .org hosted email.

1 **Approvals**

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3 **Approval of Minutes**

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5 Ms. Witters noted an error on page 2. Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the minutes, as
6 amended, of May 21, 2018. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

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8 **Approval of Warrants**

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10 Mr. Brown reviewed the warrants and had several questions. One double payment was identified and
11 removed from the warrant. It was suggested that we change the due date on the town's credit card to
12 avoid a repeat of a late fee. The warrants were approved.

13
14 Mr. Hill talked about the Governor Peck intersection at Route 117. There was a complaint that traffic
15 entering Route 117 from Route 2 never had a break, causing backups on Governor Peck for traffic
16 trying to turn left onto Route 117. Since both US 2 and Route 117 were state routes, Mr. Hill
17 suggested we communicate this to the Regional Planning Commission and ask for suggestions.

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19 **3. Adjourn**

20 Motion by Mr. Sander to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Ackerman. So voted.