

**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**  
**M a y   2 1 ,   2 0 1 8   M I N U T E S**

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

Absent:                None

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Others Present:     Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Mary Houle; Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources; Katelin Nadeau; Jean Bressor; Deborah Krug; Sgt. Matthew Nadeau; and Ruth Miller was present to videotape the meeting for MMCTV Channel 15.

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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.

Mary Houle said the Safford property (owned by the Richmond Land Trust) had quite a bit of giant hogweed, an invasive plant that could damage skin with its solaractive juices. She noted it was particularly found at the road and perhaps the Highway Department could remove it.

**2. Items for Discussion with Those Present**

Trails Committee Report & Goals

Jean Bressor, co-chair of the Richmond Trails Committee, spoke about the committee's work in creating trails and making sure they are properly signed and maintained. A big focus is maintenance of the trail network, some of which is on private land or conserved land, and some on town-owned land. She talked of recent trails on the Sunshine property and that their goal was to have a trail in every neighborhood that could connect with the village.

Ms. Witters asked if there was an updated map, and Ms. Bressor said that the most up to date map was on the website.

Mr. Hill asked if there were any concerns with the trail along Volunteers Green that keeps collapsing. Ms. Bressor said that whenever a trail was close to the river bank, it would be at risk of erosion. They have relocated sections several times and were prepared to continue to do so.

Mr. Brown asked if they had any ability to speak with Wright Preston about trails on his (PRELCO) property. Ms. Bressor said that they didn't maintain any trails there but a few did already exist.

The Selectboard thanked Ms. Bressor for her presentation.

### 3. Other Business

#### Discussion of Police Services:

Ms. Witters and Mr. Brown spoke about the ongoing public outreach for the police services discussion. Mr. Brown spoke of the upcoming listening session on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The plan was to review budgets, crime statistics, the history of the department and how it currently operates. The public should be able to match spending with the level of need for services. Ms. Witters agreed, and said that there were a lot of people interested in helping gather information.

Mr. Brown stated that he had been asked if he supported the department, and said that he did – he had three young children and a business in town and having police services was important. He hoped that what came out of this process was that people understand what the police do here in town, all that they respond to, and how the budget supports that. Do we need more? He hoped this process led to more support, but ultimately public oversight was also important.

Mr. Hill said that “level sighting” the budget was important.

Mr. Ackerman said that we had to keep in mind that the School Resource Officer (SRO) was seen as more important lately, and do we need any changes to security at schools?

Sgt. Matthew Nadeau said that department reports are available online on the town website and the department’s Facebook page. He felt that the town has a crime element that was always there and it wasn’t going away but that the department is effective in deterring crime. He said that maybe since the department was effective, the crime element wasn’t seen. He didn’t want this process to vilify the police and wanted to be able to say something in return. There was some general discussion on this and the ability of the police to join in the conversation, which was an open one.

Debbie Krug asked about the UVM report on racial bias, and why Richmond wasn’t mentioned in the report, and if the department regulations on racial bias were up to date? The Manager noted that the Vermont Criminal Justice Council promulgates these regulations, and with the exception of a recent law amendment, the department regulations are up to date on racial bias training and handling.

Katelin Nadeau worried that people are saying they don’t know what the police do. She asked if the police reports could be made available at the meetings.

#### Interim Police Chief

The Manager explained that the Interim Chief of Police advertisement has been posted online on our Town website, VLCT, and the Vermont Police Academy. He enlisted three community members to review the responses: Bob Stafford, Richmond resident and former Vermont State Trooper and Chief of Police in Hillsborough, NH; Penny Shtull, Richmond resident and Professor of Criminology for Norwich University; and Shawn Burk, the named successor to the Chief of Police in South Burlington. A Selectboard member would be welcome to join this screening group, however the plan was to limit the size to keep the process moving. Finalists are expected to interview with the Police Department members and an additional Selectboard member. The Town Manager will name the successful hire, and he’d like to have the interim chief named before the end of June.

This was expected to be a one-year position, with no plans to move the interim candidate on to a permanent position. This timeframe allows the committee to make recommendations, and give the

1 Selectboard and community at large the opportunity to make final decisions. The interim chief will be  
2 expected to assist in whichever direction the community determines – either transition our policing to  
3 a new model, or assist in recruitment of a permanent chief. The situation will remain fluid for the  
4 duration, so expectations may shift mid-year as conditions warrant.  
5

6 Sgt. Nadeau asked what the thought process was behind an interim chief and not a permanent one. He  
7 worried that having an interim chief might show that there was a chance that there might not be a  
8 department.  
9

10 The Manager explained that he felt that it would be difficult to hire a permanent chief if he could not  
11 guarantee the department wouldn't be disbanded, which is a possibility. It would take months to  
12 recruit a permanent chief and there wasn't enough time to do so, and with a dynamic department with  
13 the likelihood that officers would move to other agencies, an interim would be able to manage that  
14 without having to feel that their job is dependent on short term issues.  
15

16 Mr. Hill also responded that he didn't see that this would mean the decision is made to get rid of the  
17 department. Significant discussion followed. Mary Houle suggested Sgt. Nadeau should be the chief.  
18

19 Mr. Brown added that the department needed the support of the public.  
20

21 After some additional discussion, Sgt. Nadeau wanted to know where the Selectboard stood on hiring  
22 a permanent chief or interim. There was additional discussion, but the feeling of the board was that an  
23 interim chief was appropriate at this time. Mr. Sander wanted to explain how we got to this point,  
24 following the building study and leading up to the public wondering where the department should be  
25 in 20 years, and where was it today.  
26

27 Finally, Mary Houle noted that the current and former police chiefs both lived in towns with no police  
28 forces of their own.  
29

### 30 Discussion of Water Storage Tank Property Uses 31

32 The Manager explained that for the past few months, the Richmond Water & Sewer Commission has  
33 been discussing the future of the former water storage tanks and the land they sit on. There have been  
34 a few complaints that the unused tanks are eyesores and should be removed, as was originally intended  
35 once the new tank was complete. Due largely to financial considerations, these tanks have been left  
36 alone.  
37

38 The Water & Sewer Commission has been in charge of managing the assets used to provide services to  
39 their customers, and their core duties can be found in the Town's charter. The system customers  
40 provide virtually all of the revenue used to fund those operations through their user fees. The ultimate  
41 ownership of those assets, however, belongs to the Town as a whole, whose legislative body is the  
42 Selectboard. There is generally no conflict, but when it comes to disposal of real estate, the final say  
43 falls to the Selectboard – which is why you're discussing this now.  
44

45 The two main questions we have now are 1) should the Selectboard accelerate the removal of the  
46 unused water storage tanks by offering the Water Fund some money to help get the job done; and 2)  
47 could the tanks, or their sites, support a revenue generating cell tower?  
48

1 On the first question, the complaints about the tanks are coming from outside the system. The  
2 Selectboard may want to use these sites for something else, which means getting the tanks off (or  
3 decommissioned).

4  
5 On the second question, Water Resources Superintendent Kendall Chamberlin originally came up with  
6 the cell tower idea as a way to generate revenue for the water system. Since the Selectboard is really  
7 in charge of the final decision, any revenue from such a project could be split between the General  
8 Fund and Water Fund, or just given to one or the other.

9  
10 There was some discussion on the cost to demolish the steel tank, which was a little over \$8,000.  
11 Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources Superintendent, added that it would net maybe \$3,000 in steel  
12 recycling revenue. Mr. Hill wanted to move forward on demolishing the tank.

13  
14 Regarding the possibility of using the property for a cell tower, Mr. Chamberlin said that he had a  
15 quote of \$1,300 for East Engineering to develop and issue an RFP for examination of the site for cell  
16 tower suitability. This would actually be for three sites, both old tanks and the new tank.

17  
18 Mr. Hill was concerned about fronting this money without any up front interest. Mr. Chamberlin  
19 added that a clean site would be desirable, no one would be interested in using either old tank.

20  
21 Mr. Hill agreed that there didn't seem to be any reason to keep the steel tank longer. The rest of the  
22 board also agreed to remove the steel tank. Mr. Chamberlin asked if this then would be the  
23 responsibility of the Town and not Water Resources. The board agreed that the Town should manage  
24 the tank removal and not burden the water system.

25  
26 On the concrete 50,000 gallon tank, Mr. Chamberlin wanted to modify it for storage. Mr. Hill pressed  
27 to understand who would be allowed to store things here, and Mr. Chamberlin said only Water  
28 Resources. Mr. Hill said that the Water Commission should then decide the future of the concrete  
29 reservoir.

30  
31 It was decided that the \$1,300 on a feasibility RFP for cell towers was not ready to move forward at  
32 this time.

### 33 34 Route 2 Culvert Replacement – J. Hutchins

35  
36 The Manager explained that as reported earlier, the storm line beneath Route 2 between Harley  
37 Brown's building and the GreenSea building is failing, and we have available funds in the Highway  
38 budget to cover a replacement.

39  
40 Green Mountain Engineering will prepare a formal recommendation, but we had two bids: J. Hutchins  
41 at \$20,500 and John Scott at \$35,450. The Manager said that the J. Hutchins bid is a sound one, and  
42 we should award. This is expected to be a two-day closure of East Main while the pipe is excavated  
43 and replaced. If possible, it will happen over a weekend. We'll begin the public outreach on this as  
44 soon as possible.

45  
46 Mr. Ackerman offered a motion to award the contract for the US 2 Culvert Replacement to J. Hutchins  
47 in an amount not to exceed \$20,500 and was seconded by Mr. Brown. The motion carried 5-0.

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## NEPBA Contract Salary Grid

The Manager explained that our NEPBA contract calls for the established pay grid to increase by the “CPI of All Northeast Urban, but the CPI increase on each July 1 shall not exceed 1.5% in any given year.” This uses the CPI-U for the Northeast Region and can be found online.

However, there is no established protocol on the date of the CPI. Using the July CPI, we would wait until mid-August to make the pay adjustment. Using the April or May CPI would allow a July 1 implementation of the new grid, and I propose doing so now and establishing this as the standard to be utilized in the future. The April 2018 CPI-U Northeast is up 2.1% year over year, which would allow the grid to move at its maximum of 1.5%. Since the year over year trend for the year so far has been increasing from its January low of 1.6%, the indication is that waiting for the May CPI (to be released on June 12<sup>th</sup>) would not likely yield a year over year of less than 1.5%. The difference between steps is established at 2%, so the movement for the officers would be at the maximum 3.5% year over year allowed in the contract. The only issue this year is when to set the time standard for measuring the CPI-U Northeast.

Ms. Witters offered a motion to approve the using of the April 2018 CPI-U Northeast as the basis for adjusting the NEPBA salary grid for the next year of the contract, allowing for a 1.5% movement of the grid. Mr. Sander seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.

## Reports from Selectboard and Town Manager

The Manager noted the Police Report and the Budget Status.

May 4<sup>th</sup> Storm Damage Update: All of our most significant damage is repaired and most of the small stuff has been cleaned up. What remains is mostly minor shoulder repairs, ditching and grading. The State of Vermont has requested a “Preliminary Damage Assessment” which is a prelude to requesting a federal disaster declaration. It is likely that the financial thresholds will be met – the October wind storm was of a smaller scale and still qualified. However, this is a damage claim for us with a \$3,000 minimum per site qualifier. The Manager believed we have three sites that would qualify, with perhaps a \$50,000 max – although some of that will be disqualified as mitigation efforts. We’re prepared to make our claim if the opportunity arises.

Police Cruiser Update: The police cruiser is at the Highway garage. VLCT is connecting with Ford Motor Credit to total the vehicle. We have removed a couple of items, which are the radio, radar and cameras that we purchased separately from the cruiser. The other equipment, such as the lights and cage, stay with the totaled vehicle.

Route 2 Regional Concerns Meeting: June 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, and we’ll discuss the alternatives for the replacement of the US 2 bridge over I-89.

Town Plan Update: As of today, the town plan is almost finished. The goal is for the Planning Commission to warn a public hearing by May 24<sup>th</sup>. The plan may be found online at <http://www.richmondvt.gov/documents/2018-town-plan-draft-information/>

Water Customer Meeting: May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6pm in Town Center, to discuss the year’s accomplishments, approve the final budget and rate adjustments, if needed.

1 Town Forest Update: We have agreements on VELCO's use of the log road and lease of the log  
2 landing for five months, netting the Management Fund \$2,500. These funds will help develop a site  
3 plan for the new parking lot and possibly gates and other signage. The property is open to the public,  
4 however, the public should stay off the road due to its heavy use. Trails bypassing the road are being  
5 planned now.

6  
7 Water Storage Tank Issues Updates: Besides the cell tower siting issue, there are outstanding  
8 landscaping, erosion repair and demolition questions open. The landscaping improvements should be  
9 happening soon – being led by Matt Leonetti, our Tree Warden. Some plants are being donated by  
10 Mary Houle, and some are being purchased. The erosion repairs, from May 4<sup>th</sup> runoff, is complete and  
11 would qualify for federal funding, if a disaster is declared. The demolition of the steel tank is still  
12 unsolved, and the potential use of the concrete tank for storage is being considered – otherwise it  
13 would be demolished.

14  
15 Bolton Police Contract: The overtime traffic patrol contract with Bolton expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>. I've  
16 written them regarding this, and asking them to consider their needs and if they would want a renewal.  
17 At this time, I'm not sure if we will be able to honor a year-long contract, and our board has not  
18 discussed continuing the contract.

19  
20 Volunteers Green Playground Repairs: over the winter, several deficiencies in our playground were  
21 identified, including a cracked slide, damaged tire swing, cracked coatings on the swing chains, and  
22 some other damage. Pete ordered new parts in April and they should be installed the week of May  
23 21<sup>st</sup>.

24  
25 The Manager added that Stonecutter Brewery wants to have a special permit to sell alcoholic  
26 beverages at the Round Church Green on July 4<sup>th</sup>. There was some discussion. The Manager noted  
27 that the park ordinance did not technically apply to the Round Church Green, and Western Slopes  
28 Business Association has had a vendor in the past during their art festival. There was some discussion  
29 on this but with unanswered questions, the board requested this be rescheduled to June 4<sup>th</sup>.

30  
31 The Manager then added that the Green Mountain Athletic Association requested the annual Round  
32 Church Women's Run, and associated Cochran Road closure, be on July 28, from 8:30 – 9:30. The  
33 Manager explained that this race had been held this way for many years with no negative feedback.

34  
35 Mr. Brown offered a motion to approve the Round Church Women's Run and closure of Cochran  
36 Road on July 28, 2018, and was seconded by Mr. Sander. The motion carried 5-0.

### 37 38 **Approvals**

#### 39 40 **Approval of Minutes**

41  
42 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve the minutes of May 7, 2018 and was seconded by Mr.  
43 Ackerman. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Mr. Hill abstaining.

#### 44 45 **Municipal Roads Grants in Aid and Letter of Intent**

46  
47 The Manager explained that through the Municipal Roads General Permit, the town was obligated to  
48 develop and follow a plan to improve certain road segments to prevent erosion which leads to water  
49 pollution. Since Richmond was not an MS-4 town, upgrading gravel roads by ditching improvements  
50 and proper culverts was the main goal. This program provided some funding to accomplish these

1 tasks, but a letter of intent to apply for the funding, and a \$250 fee, was required to receive the  
2 \$15,400 grant. The match of \$3,840 could be covered by the gravel budget. Wes White Hill ditching  
3 improvements would be the target this Summer.  
4

5 Ms. Witters explained more detail about the program, and noted that while she works in the water  
6 quality program at the state, she did not work on this grant program.  
7

8 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve signature of the Municipal Roads Program Letter of Intent and  
9 was seconded by Mr. Ackerman. The motion carried 5-0.  
10

#### 11 Approval of Warrants & Purchase Orders

  
12

13 Mr. Sander had a couple of questions on the billing.  
14

15 The warrants were reviewed and approved.  
16

17 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 3508 in the amount of \$32,786 to the Water  
18 Resources Department for Fire Protection (budget transfer) and was seconded by Ms. Witters. The  
19 motion carried 5-0.  
20

21 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 3511 in the amount of \$1,388,000 to the  
22 Richmond Schools for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax payment, and was seconded by Mr. Brown. The motion  
23 carried 5-0.  
24

25 Ms. Witters offered a motion to approve Purchase Order 5514 to Buttermilk, LLC for Requisition #6  
26 in the amount of \$26,955 and was seconded by Mr. Brown. The motion carried 5-0. The Manager  
27 explained that the requisition to the state included \$2,500 for the town related to Cathedral Square  
28 management expenses.  
29

30 Mr. Sander offered a motion to approve a revision to Purchase Order 3438 to Lane Enterprises for a  
31 revised culvert cost (related to Dugway Road), increasing the purchase order to \$6,910.08. Ms.  
32 Witters seconded the motion, and the motion carried 5-0.  
33

#### 34 **4. Adjourn**

35 Motion by Mr. Ackerman to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Witters. So voted.