

Richmond Selectboard Meeting Minutes 12/19/18-DRAFT

Called to Order: 7:01pm In Attendance: Bard Hill, David Sander, Christy Witters, Roger Brown, Steve Ackerman, Josh Arneson, Connie Bona, Jessica Draper, Linda Parent, Mary Houle, Marcia Gardner, Gerald Levesque, Dennis Gile, Stefani Hartsfield, Guthrie Hartsfield, Martha Marciel, Patty Bruschetti, Kevin Dorn

Public Comment: Mary Houle requested that the selectboard give her the same deference that was given to the Andrews family during the creation of the town forest, while deciding what to do with the vacant lot previously owned by her on Cochran Road.

COP Program presented by Kevin Dorn: Kevin Dorn, the South Burlington City Manager, presented the Community Outreach Program to the selectboard. He explained that the program was created by a coalition of emergency and health service providers as well as municipalities in Chittenden County after South Burlington and other neighboring towns experienced high levels of mental health crises such as suicide attempts. The program began in early 2018, starting with the placement of four mental health counselors in different towns able to respond alongside emergency services including the police. The selectboard discussed the funding requirement of \$9000 for Richmond to participate, and how success is going to be measured. The selectboard members agreed that the program would be beneficial, and that there is a definite need for mental health support in general. They agreed the budget would have to be reviewed in order to find the funding for this program if they chose to pursue it. Roger Brown mentioned that Paco had expressed support for it and indicated that he could find space in the budget to implement it.

Budget: Mary Houle suggested that it may be time to consider creation of an Economic Development Fund. Josh Arneson mentioned that he received a call from a community member who wanted to remind the selectboard about health insurance payment options and the possibility of using surplus to decrease the budget. Bard Hill said that the Police insurance is set by contract, and it is the current opinion of the board not to treat the other employees differently. He also said that utilizing surplus is up for discussion. Josh Arneson and Connie Bona presented their proposed changes to the budget that would bring the increase down to less than 2.5%. The first proposal was to use the Jericho Road Fund to pay down the Jericho Rd Budget lines on page 9 of the draft budget. Bard Hill asked that it be presented in a way that will show that the funds will be used to pay down a budget line rather than cut the budget line, so that it won't look like a dramatic increase in fiscal year 2021 when the Jericho Rd budget line goes back up. Josh and Connie presented four possible staffing options for the police department, noting that two of the options presented would bring the budget down to the desired increase. The selectboard chose to make one of the police positions part time and use surplus funds to implement the COP program for a one-year trial. Josh Arneson noted that he was still researching the options for IT support, and would have a better idea by the first January meeting.

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The selectboard discussed options for including appropriations in departmental budgets or including them completely as a separate part of the budget. It was also suggested to possibly have appropriations voted on from the floor at town meeting. It was decided to present all appropriation requests in one concise list and ask the organizations to come and present or discuss their request in person with the board in January. The Edmunds fund was briefly discussed, and will be researched further. Connie and Josh were instructed to confirm the figures discussed at tonight's meeting and return in January with a new draft showing the lower increase.

Steve Ackerman moved to adjourn. Seconded by David Sander. All were in favor. Adjourned 9:32pm.