

Town of Richmond Selectboard Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2022

Members Present: Christine Werneke, David Sander, Bard Hill, June Heston, Jay Furr

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager; Kyle Kapitanski, Police Chief

Others Present: Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Joseph, Samuel Waters, Lauck Parke, Chris Haggerty, Martha Nye, Patty Brushett, Jon Kart, Allen Knowles, Ian Bender, Ryan Dinneen, Denise Noble, Gretchen Paulsen, Ann Naumann, Connie Van Eeghen, Waficfaour

Called to Order: 7:00pm

Welcome by: Werneke

Reminder that we do not have to offer a public space for meeting per State.

Public Comment:

_Duncan Wardwell welcome and introduction.

_Texter outside of Town Office wondering why no public meeting.

Hill: Act 78 clarifies we do not need to offer an in-person meeting

Hill: Moment of silence for Geoff Urbanik.

Heston: Geoff's wife, Liz, has asked for some privacy

Werneke: Any objections or edits to the agenda

Executive Session: Pending litigation related to Williams Hill Rd.

Sander moved to find that premature general public knowledge of the Selectboard's discussion of a pending civil litigation related to Williams Hill Rd. to which the public body is a party, would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Hill.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Furr moved to enter into executive session to discuss a legal matter under the provisions of 1 VSA 313(a)(1) of the Vermont State Statutes and to invite the Town Manager, Josh Arneson, Attorney Joe McLean and Surveyor Chis Haggerty, into the executive session. Seconded by Sander

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Furr moved to exit executive session. Seconded by Hill.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed at 7:35 pm

Update on services at Solid Waste Transfer Station and consideration of correcting an error on pricing for sleeper sofas

Ryan Dinneen (from Solid Waste Transfer Station): Everything up and online and apologies to any problems in start up. Had ordered most of the items for final setup and online. Permitted last Friday for lightbulbs and ordered packaging. Shed was removed last week. Rebuild ReUse center. Everything should be put together for March deadline. Oversight of missing number of bid for sleeper sofas. Any questions.

Werneke: Typo that +\$7 should not be listed as \$7. The intention was to charge \$29 for a sleeper sofa, which is \$7 more than the \$22 charge for sofa.

Bard: Traffic flow concerns coming out of Transfer Station. More assertive signage to teach public that traffic flow has changed.

Dinneen: Going to paint arrows in spring. People are used to old system. When it is busy it actually works better. When people are not paying attention then it creates some challenges. Public reach out to inform and instruct public in the change.

Furr: ReUse Zone should have a public ribbon cutting.

Dinneen: Happy to put some fanfare for ReUse Zone

Heston: Figured out the new traffic pattern no problem even when not busy

Heston moved to approve the amendment to the agreement with Casella that will adjust pricing to drop off a sleeper sofa to \$29.00. Seconded by Sander

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Consideration of approval of process for making appointments to Town committees

Werneke: This item deals with how the Selectboard appoints members to Town Committees. In the past, individuals would submit interest and the Committee would make a recommendation to Selectboard. In the case of the DRB, it might be a conflict of interest or would not be advised as type of decisions and potential membership. Appoint members in May. Do we separate out that process for DRB or for other committees?

Furr: DRB should not be recommending its own members. But maybe not enough members?

Heston: Any quasi-judicial board members should be reviewed first by Selectboard. All interested parties should go to Selectboard first and not DRB.

Werneke: DRB would be the only committee which does not get to make a recommendation to the Selectboard on its members. where it needs oversight from Selectboard first. Other committees like Rec, Trails would get to make recommendations.

Heston moves that quasi-judicial boards do not have a chance to review and make recommendations to the Selectboard about appointments while other committees are welcome to do so. Seconded by Furr.

Ian Bender: Has the been a problem. Why now?

Werneke: We are looking for volunteers to join many boards so we were reviewing the process. It was a question many months ago about getting on DRB. It was discussed for awhile as it became an issue that DRB would have input into the selection of its own members.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Consideration of feedback to VTrans on shoulder width in sections of the Rt. 2 paving project

Werneke: Pinch points on Rt 2 that would not be able to achieve the 5ft shoulder sections. We have drawings to show those places. See email from Rob White from VTrans. 6 locations where there cannot be 11 ft travel lanes and five foot shoulders. Wondering about some of the locations where the “topography” interferes (like Richmond Welcome Sign on W. Main St for right of way). Can we replace the culverts and achieve the 5 ft shoulders? Want to review a clear map and location of those 6 locations.

Hill: Do we have an actual site plan from VTrans about where are the actual positions?

Arneson: Shared the document that lists the 6 different spots. Still confused about what the actual 6 to 8 spots are discussed as:

1-Rt117 and Rt 2, 2-East of Park & Ride, 3-On ramp I89 and Rt 2 On Ramps, 4-Around Mobil, 5-Old retaining wall just past the Mobile station where the woods begin. Past Crate Escape but before the Welcome Sign (slide 62), 6- (slide 63), 7- Around Hatchet/Dental sign (slide 64), 8- (slide 65)

Hill: We would want explanations on exact spots that are not possible
For instance, they installed an old retaining wall many years ago but might be hesitant to remove now. Suggest we use this as an opportunity to meet with VTrans and walk thru each of the areas and how to alleviate problem.

Jon Kart: Request better highlighted diagrams as these maps intend to confuse.

Werneke: Looks like more than 6 places and we should get a more formal walk-thru and explanation instead of trying to read the diagrams and make mistakes in assumptions.

Heston: Highway interchange is 4 feet. Other areas are 5 feet. (Werneke confirmed)

Jon Kart: Transportation Committee would be best to help out. Coming East into the Village there is an extended 3 foot stretch with a metal guardrail. Even more dangerous as going uphill. Draft a letter titled about the dangers of the high traffic, dangerous areas and VTrans has plenty of time to work on it.

Hill: Continued theme from VTrans of nodding and doing nothing. Might be time to invite our elected public legislatures in the room to help put pressure on our intent. This is an essential 50 year plan that we need to increase attention

Allen Knowles: Stretch West of Village less than 2 feet of 200-300 feet were uphill. Dangerous for anyone biking or walking in or out of village. Our Town needs to have accessible entrance and exits for bikers and pedestrians.

Werneke: Josh & I will connect with VTrans about requesting a walk-thru to review (1) reasons why each place is less than 5 ft, and (2) what needs to be done to get the 5'.

Arneson: We don't need a motion but will connect with VTrans moving in that direction.

Werneke: Is Selectboard comfortable with Arneson and Werneke moving forward?

Consensus was yes.

Consideration of setting a date for a public hearing to consider adoption of a rule requiring the wearing of face coverings indoors in public spaces

Furr move to set a hearing date of February 22, 2022 at 7pm to consider adoption of a face covering mandate in the Town of Richmond. Heston seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Consideration of approving a letter of support for Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom Grant Application for fiber-optic internet conversions in Richmond

Werneke: This does not require a match from the Town. This is just requesting a letter of support for the Grant Application.

Heston moves to approve the letter of support for the Waitsfield and Champlain Valley Telecom Grant Application to the State of Vermont's Community Broadband Board. Secended by Furr

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Werneke: Further expansion of fiber-optics and internet speed is a different topic for ARPA future consideration.

Consideration of entering into an agreement with Axon Enterprise Inc. for body cameras

Kapitanski: Axon was chosen based on integrity of data and consistency with our police tools. \$10,000 for body camera in FY22 budget. 5 year agreement. \$2,900 per year line item?

Werneke: Work with Connie to fall into budgeted amounts. Where are the images and content stored?

Kapitanski: Contract with Axon provides 100 GB of storage and can purchase additional storage based on usage. We won't know how much we might need before we start collecting data. It automatically purges data that does not have any specific interest or details.

Heston moved to approve entering into a five-year agreement with Axon Enterprise Inc. for the purchase of body cameras. Secended by Hill..

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Follow up discussion on Police Advisory Committee

Werneke: There was a group in the past and is included in the package listed online. How do we engage with community members and police? Is this mutually beneficial? Is this a worthwhile conversation. No action to be taken tonight.

Furr: Police Dept does collect stats but only gets published once a year. Not so easy to review. Committees are not always representative of community. Shouldn't we review this on a quarterly basis and let it be public for everyone to see and comment. Include quarterly forums to share thoughts and opinions on how things are going. Last time the Committee did not work out so well (according to some). Secondly, it didn't last too long, and nothing happened in real-time. Likes idea of transparency more frequently, easier to get to.

Hill: What is the role of the committee and how will we know if it is effective? If we create a group then we need to be clear on role and function. It is daunting how valid and reliable the data is. Start with quarterly meetings to review some yearly trends. Baseline information can then become a "data improvement agenda." What data do we have and how can we make it better?

Heston: We should not make assumptions about previous effectiveness of previous committee group. Previous group felt there was no relationship with officers. The old group was about community policing and establishing relationships. What information do we want? With lack of committee volunteers, we should still explore avenues for keeping communication open between community members and officers.

Furr: The old committee didn't hang around for some reason. How can we keep the conversation going?

Werneke: The point of having a committee is to serve as a quality control officer. Everyone is responsible for delivering quality, but the committee serves just a few limited voices. Suggest Selectboard meetings makes it more of a regular review, so we are all involved in the quality review.

Kapitanski: Not opposed to quarterly meetings. Reluctant to release data, specifically race related, unless first ensuring that it conforms to current statutes. Need a better understanding of how it would be structured. What is the moderation, timekeeping, manageable meeting agenda?

Hill: You don't want to release data that might isolate or identify a specific incident. Suggest with quarterly meetings and then start comparing to last year or other towns. What does community policing look like, feel like, and how would we know from the data if it is working.

Kapitanski: The data is a little bit complicated to navigate through.

Furr: Data can be unreliable if taken in too small of a slice. Quarterly would be a good interval to review information.

Connie van Eeghen: As a Richmond resident and member of the Racial Equity Group, pleased to have opportunity to have an open conversation about how to build a community and be an inclusive community. This is a great opportunity to think in different ways to create connections and relationships like inclusion statement recently voted on. The Richmond Racial Equity group looking at sharing information that might marginalize groups or individuals. Informal proposal of (1) review data regularly, (2) report to Town about efforts and learning. Previous polls suggest a wide variety of

opinions within the community. Police Department should develop a mission statement that helps us find common ground on what matters. The members of the group would like to use their research and reach out for a better community involvement.

Werneke: Do you want to be on the agenda for next time?

Ann Naumann: Still have some data and reports to organize so we will reach out to Arneson when we are ready to get on the agenda.

Review of FY22 second quarter financial reports

Werneke: This has been spread over two meetings. See postings on website. Lots of information so any questions or comments from Selectboard?

Heston: Questions for Arneson to take back to Connie

-1- Accounts receivable asset is Balance sheet -\$9,857 does not sound like an asset

-2- Allow for doubtful account sounds like a liability should not be an asset

-3- Pg 149 of balance shows compensated absences but not sure what that is

-4- Month to date column revenue shows -\$8,760,107

Willing to come in and go over with Connie

Arneson: Will ask Connie and follow up

Furr: Looking over some of the documents like pgs 15-24. Assuming these funds are interest bearing and need to be spent on certain topics Not sure what all these funds for?

Arneson: Funds 10 & 11 are the general fund and highway fund. Funds 25 to 73 other accounts. For example, grant and reserve accounts are found here.

Furr: Need some more time to dive into each line item about what these mean

Hill: Maybe we do a public meeting to go over each of these items.

Heston: Many people might not attend but still a good idea to provide that guidance to Selectboard members

Werneke: Selectboard has the ability to manage and educate about these items. Often financial reports also come with a narrative. Maybe this is a happy medium for those people who don't want to dig dip into the line items.

Heston: Agree we need to do more of a tutorial for Selectboard and community members.

Hill: After Town Meeting, let's put this on the agenda so we can move forward with a more instructive look at financials.

Review of Richmond Rescue Quarterly Report

Werneke: Thankful for having such a functional and reliable Rescue. We are lucky!

Heston: The Report was amazing and easy to understand.

Werneke: Might serve as a template for other departments to use

Approval of Minutes Warrants and Purchase Orders:

Furr moves to approve Minutes for January 18. Seconded by Heston

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Furr moves to approve Minutes for Feb 1. Seconded by Sander

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Purchase Order for Pearson and Associates

Werneke: Didn't we already approved this one?

Arneson: Checked notes and we did not approve the PO yet

Sander moved to approve PO 4306 for \$21,115 to Pearson and Associates for project engineering and repairs at Library. Seconded by Heston.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Warrants

Werneke: Seems like a bunch of moves on the Electronic Warrants. Is this a reflection of activity? I don't recall this number of moves in the past.

Arneson: Some checks were deposited into the Town Account instead of the Water account. Some checks come into drop box and listed with just parcel id thinking it is tax. It is a month later when we correct those errors. Another one was a simple error of making a deposit into the wrong account.

Invoices

Heston: Champlain Door shows a credit of \$623.40

Arneson: Yes, it is deducted from the Total Due amount.

Heston moves to approve warrants. Seconded by Hill.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed

Items for next agenda:

- _Audit Review
- _Road Closure Cocharn Rd (July) for Bicycle Ride
- _VT Coop Moving Electric Lines to be more in line with Snipe Ireland Rd
- _Windows for Radiate Art Space
- _Review ARPA Request meeting this Wednesday
- _Progress Report for ARPA progress

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body is a party, would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Hill.

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Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed.

Adjournment

Heston moved to adjourn. Seconded by Hill.

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander, Werneke in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:53 pm

Chat file from Zoom:

From Patty Brushett to Everyone 07:06 PM

Geoff served the Town

From jon.kart to Everyone 07:57 PM

Death strips is a more accurate term than "pinch points"

From Ann Naumann to Everyone 08:08 PM

Does the wall need to be there?

From Allen Knowles to Everyone 08:24 PM

Thank you to the Selectboard for their time and efforts on getting Rt 2 right.

From Ann Naumann to Everyone 08:36 PM

it is not at all accessible

From Denise Noble (she/her) to Everyone 08:38 PM

Agree wholeheartedly!

From Denise Noble (she/her) to Everyone 08:48 PM

Well stated Bard with regard to the journey of figuring out what you want/need as you go.

From gretchen paulsen to Everyone 08:57 PM

Very well stated Connie. Thank you

From Denise Noble (she/her) to Everyone 08:59 PM

Just huge thanks to all!! Working together, openly, honestly with compassion and open hearts, minds and ears is a great thing!!!