

Town of Richmond Selectboard Meeting Minutes of February 6, 2023

Members Present: Bard Hill, David Sander, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, June Heston

Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager; Connie Bona, Finance Director; Allen Carpenter, Interim Water Resources Superintendent; Alyson Dengler, Police Officer; Benjamin Herrick, Interim Police Chief

Others Present: Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Angela Cote, Cara LaBounty, Chuck Gilroy, Dave T, David Thomas, Erin Farr, Francine Pomerantz, Jeanann Haskin, Jim Monahan, John Rankin, Kathy, Katie Mather, Kevin McAleer, Lauck Parke, Lisa Kory, Lisa Miller, Martha Nye, Patty Brushett, Rod West, Steve Bower, Susan Wells, Virginia Clarke

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Welcome by: Heston

Public Comment:

LaBounty: I have provided the Selectboard with information from the attorney for the Vermont Secretary of State's Office regarding access and storage of public records. Richmond is not currently doing that. They have 10 days to provide information from a public request. I have been asking for information for many, many months. I am asking the Selectboard to take action and remedy the situation. I asked for information regarding the Water and Sewer Department and the cost of the expansion project out to the Gateway. If the Town of Richmond has destroyed records than that is an issue.

Heston: I checked the State website, and some things can be destroyed after an audit.

LaBounty: If you destroy things after an audit then there is no reason that we cannot have electronic copies.

Hill: This might be a follow up for a future agenda. I have not looked at our Town policy for maintenance of records. We need to look at the remediation of the immediate issue and then address future issues.

Furr: I agree that we should be scanning everything. Server space is not going to fill up and it could be electronically searchable.

Mather: Scanning and making it publicly searchable is easier said than done. It takes a fair amount of time. It has to be scanned and stored in a particular location.

LaBounty: This is for staff to be able to search for it.

Furr: It can be done if you are systematic about it.

Heston: We will put it on a future agenda.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda: None

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Consideration of making an appointment to the Recreation Committee

Heston: The seat on the Committee that is reserved for a Bolton resident is currently vacant. The term for this seat runs until 2024. Bolton Resident Kathy Costello has applied for appointment to this seat. The Bolton Selectboard has voted to recommend her for appointment. The application is in our information.

*Furr moved to appoint Kathy Costello to the Recreation Committee to fill the seat that is reserved for a Bolton Resident with a term expiring in 2024. Sander seconded.
Roll Call Vote follows discussion.*

Forward: I am trying to understand the rationale of having people from other Towns be on our Committee.

Arneson: Most of their work is focused on Volunteers Green. It is not only Richmond residents who use Volunteers Green. The Selectboard approved of having a resident from each of those Towns to provide some feedback. The Recreation Committee does not make binding decisions as they come back for Selectboard approval.

Forward: I welcome the input. Do they contribute in any fashion?

Arneson: There are no transfer of funds.

Heston: The Recreation budget is not on the agenda. We could have this discussion at another meeting.

Hill: We could review the role of neighboring Towns.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Consideration of a request from Andrews Community Forest Committee to utilize \$800.00 from the Andrews Community Forest Fund

Heston: We have the information in our packet. There is going to be a community meeting being held. The current balance of the Fund is \$32,468.37.

Monahan: My name is Jim Monahan from the Andrews Community Forest Committee. We are doing a public engagement meeting on March 29 with various professionals. We want to buy some food, have some refreshments, and print some 3' by 4' maps of the trail layout and recommended changes to the management plan. We are thinking from 3-5 maps. We might do a couple of color overlays.

LaBounty: Are you doing a mailing out to people? Or is this just for food?

Monahan: We are estimating \$400-\$500 for map printing and about \$200 for food and drink supplies. I am not going to spend it if we do not need it.

LaBounty: Is the outreach just for trail changes? Or are there going to be restrictions on the land itself.

Monahan: It is a revised management plan that we have been working on for four years. It will be online before the meeting. We want people to see the work we are doing with trail layouts. The Arrowwood professionals will be there. We will have somebody from VLT. I am fine with these conversations, but I am asking for the food. I would think 60-70 people would attend.

Furr moved to approve the request from the Andrews Community Forest Committee to use \$800.00 from the Andrews Community Forest Fund for a public engagement meeting. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Consideration of approving Certificate of Highway Mileage

Heston: This is an annual approval of the highway mileage for the Town of Richmond. The State bases State Aid for Town Highways on the mileage of roads in each municipality. The Town's mileage has been updated to remove the 0.3 miles of Class 4 road that the Town lost in the legal process related to Williams Hill Rd.

Arneson: The document shows that we are going from 3.11 miles of Class 4 roads to 2.81 miles. Funding is really based on Class 2 and 3 roads so we should still get the same funding.

Furr moved to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage for 2023. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Consideration of approving an application for a Rural Economic Development Initiative grant to hire a grant writing consultant

Forward: The Town Center Committee realizes whatever we do to this building will be expensive. The building has lots of different attributes that might be attractive to a variety of grant funders for preservation, energy, and community development. We have an opportunity to apply for the Rural Economic Development Initiative. There is information in the packet. The total award amount could be for a value up to \$7,500. There is no match for this grant.

Furr: I am in favor of strategically using grants like this.

Hill moved that the Town Of Richmond apply for a Rural Economic Development Initiative grant to hire a grant writing consultant and to name Town Manager Josh Arneson as the grant manager. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Consideration of setting a hearing date to amend the Traffic Ordinance

Arneson: The Parking Advisory Committee has come back with Cochran Rd. and Dugway draft language for the Ordinance in order to enforce it. There is a 60 day waiting period after the hearing date. There is also a request to review the \$25 fine. Kevin McAleer notified me today there might be a few errors in the Ordinance so if we clean it up tonight then we should be fine. Kevin and the rest of the Committee can provide information.

McAleer: I was going to defer because I went out today with the wheel and we realized 963 feet should have been 693 feet. I would rather error on the side of caution rather than save 2 weeks.

Arneson: We have two meetings in March back-to-back so if you come back in two weeks it might only bump it a week. It might be mid- to late-May even on that time-frame.

McAleer: I say we bump it so I can check the numbers.

Forward: With this ordinance, I do not know how to deal with no parking on the side of the road on Wes White Hill Rd. by Gillett Pond.

Arneson: Gillett Pond area is where there is no parking on the traveled portion of the road. That is being asked to be enforced on Cochran and Dugway Rd. We have been writing more tickets in the Gillett Pond area this winter. It has not been enforced that way in the past.

Forward: It is not a problem like on Dugway Rd.

Hill: I think no parking on the traveled portion of the road defaults to a State statute.

Herrick: The law is you cannot park in the road. The Town has taken a hard line that parking in the roadway is not ok. It is not fair to one group of people to aggressively ticket and ignore another group. On Wes White Hill Rd, there is not enough for two cars to get by each other with a third car parked on the road. I don't see why it would be ok on Wes White Hill.

Heston: It creates a slippery slope if you use subjectivity where you enforce the law. People may say I am being targeted or this person is getting away with it.

Hill: Is it possible to have parking violations with different financial values in different areas?

Heston: Good question.

Rankin: I have heard from the Richmond Land Trust that when the dam is complete they may have a small number of parking spaces. I think it would reasonable for the Police to focus their attention on other things if there was no clear safety hazard. There are maybe 3 spots on the wide open stretch near Huntington where you can park.

Haskin: It was never an issue when we parked on the side of the road with my kids. My question is what is the Town to help provide parking for the people who want to use these natural resources?

Heston: The Parking Committee has done a lot to focus on improving our parking. If you have two sets of rules then people will speak up about that.

Herrick: The idea of a \$200 ticket on Dugway and a \$10 on Wes White is still targeting on group of people. A straightaway may be safe in certain conditions but we are talking about ice skating in the winter with slippery road. The safety aspect changes when you narrow it down by a car width.

Hill: We will have an interesting conversation with Traffic Ordinance including 6A Parking Regulations: Roads.

Heston: When we get there.

Furr: We should enforce the law equally. I have gone down Wes White Hill past Gillett Pond, if it is crowded then you cannot get by and it is not safe.

McAleer: We hear the comment about balancing access to safe accessible parking. We do not take it lightly. We appreciate that feedback and are trying to do our best.

Hill: The Land Trust might be present or represented when we discuss this.

Heston: This will be on a future agenda.

Consideration of appointing two Selectboard members to the Police Chief Hiring Committee and including a seat for the Williston Community Justice Center on the Committee

Heston: There are two seats reserved for Selectboard members on the Police Chief Hiring Committee. We reviewed a timeline. How would the Selectboard consider me serving on the Committee when I roll off as a Selectboard member?

Furr: Why not leave two on and have a community member? I would hate to lose June's experience.

Forward: In the meantime, we can appoint June as a Selectboard member.

Arneson: Come March 7th, we can have a 9–10-person Committee. We wanted this filled by February 24 for the hiring committee.

Heston: I would love to serve on the Committee.

Hill: After Town Meeting Day there is at least one more person here. Maybe the Selectboard after Town Meeting Day should formally state or review the 2 Selectboard members. We could reboot after Town Meeting Day for who the 2 on-going members are.

Arneson: The timeline stays the same, we appoint 2 Selectboard members tonight, and we keep 1 community spot open and then review that. We can go to 9-10 members as it is a short-lived committee. We can say a previous Selectboard member can stay on.

Heston: Maybe we appoint 2 Selectboard members tonight and after Town Meeting we determine what to do. I would be interested in serving.

Hill: It is the Town Manager's hiring process. We are advising.

Forward moved to appoint June Heston and Bard Hill to the Police Chief Hiring Committee. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Sander in favor. Heston and Hill abstain.

Motion approved.

Consideration of selling the Tesla police cruiser

Forward: We needed to collect information and data to determine if the experiment is working. I tried to discern the cost and the savings. I collected data from our cruiser fuel suppliers and Tesla. My estimates were close. It saved about \$5,000 in fuel savings. The maintenance savings were also anticipated. The Tesla has a 120,000 mile, 8 year warranty which is much longer than our conventional cars. I have an electric vehicle and it takes less maintenance. The first Police Chief loved it and this Police Chief doesn't so what does the next one think? This is not a decision we should be making tonight. We would be down a car if we sold it.

Hill: It is worth liquidating an asset? We have been talking about the replacement cycles for cruisers for several years. I defer to the next Chief. The cost per mile for a Tesla is way less than a cruiser. It could be used as a commuting vehicle. That might be a way to maintain it as a low-cost commuting vehicle.

Sander: I have changed my mind and I am now back to thinking we should not sell the Tesla. A Tesla does not depreciate like an internal-combustion engine vehicle. This is a decision the next Chief should make. I am hesitant of telling Department heads what equipment we should be using. I hear considerable feedback of about 4 to 1 that people are opposed to selling it.

Furr: I would sell the Tesla yesterday. Our current Police Chief has stated why it is not a suitable Police car. There is no room for a cage or a locked rifle and shotgun rack. It has to sit at a charger for multiple hours each just to function the powered equipment.

Heston: I agree with Jay. This is not about electric versus gas vehicle. We should be moving toward electric. We should listen to Ben. We have heard from all the officers that they do not want to patrol in it. We have 6 cruisers and we are not hiring a Chief in the next 6 months. We need 2 cruisers really. It is financially irresponsible to have 6 cruisers sitting in our parking lot.

Herrick: Electric vehicles are where we should be just not that electric vehicle. I do not fit in the car. If someone were to put my hands behind my back and try to cram me in the back passenger seat it is not going to fit. There is also a computer in front of the passenger seat. If you do not have a cage then you transport in the front seat.

Furr: I am in favor of electric cars just not this one.

LaBounty: I have a much larger ratio of people who are in favor of selling the Tesla. It is a safety issue. This car is just a commuter car and it is not the best investment. We have been waiting for a Chief and 5 officers for over 5 years. You are adding a burden to the Police force to maintain these vehicles.

Bower: I would like to see the Town work towards the climate change goals in the Town Plan. People understand that electric vehicles are a cost effective way to do that. Other municipalities and Police Departments across the country are moving toward electric vehicles. I would like to see the Tesla put to good use. I would like to see the Police use it as a commuter vehicle.

Bona: If we sell the Tesla then it would go towards the revenue Police Property Sold line which would end up in Unassigned Funds. Then when we do the FY25 budget, we could use x number of dollars for the Police Capital Reserve line. We could have other emergency situations come up. The funds would not go immediately into Reserves.

Clarke: Speaking as resident and with my Planning Commissioner hat on, I want to reiterate that our climate goals in Town, County, and State Plans require a rapid electrification of small vehicles and light trucks. It is about the appearance of electric versus gas. Selling the Tesla at this point just gives the appearance that electric vehicles aren't going to work. Let's try to make this vehicle work for us. It looks like a step backwards to be saying we cannot deal with it. I say hold on to it for now.

Gilroy: I do not fit in the backseat of a Tesla. We want to electrify our fleet but I do not want to compromise the safety of our officers.

Hill moved to enter into a public bidding process to sell the Tesla police cruiser with a minimum bid of \$36,000. Furr seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion.

Dengler: As the smallest Officer, I do not feel it is safe. Has anybody looked into trading up for a larger model?

Heston: Not that I am aware of. We are not budgeted to buy a cruiser this year which is probably why we haven't had that conversation yet.

Mather: Are all Officers required to come to Town Center when they begin their shift? Do they go to calls from their houses?

Herrick: Officers are not required to go to the Town Office when they sign on. I frequently respond to a call on my commute into work or before I go to the Town Office. Right now, the Union Contract states that every full-time Officer will have a take-home car.

Forward: I agree we should be using all the vehicles we have. It doesn't help the conventional vehicles if they are not being used. They could be rotated. Our current gas

mileage on our conventional cruisers is about 13.5 mpg as they often idle a lot. No matter what we do, we are not changing the budget and it will not effect the taxpayers at all. One of our conventional cruisers has over 100,000 miles on it. The Tesla can be charged at the Town Center and ready to go in the morning. Charging is a different exercise that going to a gas station. A take home car can be any one of the 6 cars.

Bona: Maybe we do not buy 2 cruisers but trade up with the Tesla for an electric vehicle that does work for the Police Department.

Furr: I am not willing to tell our Police Officers we are going to compromise safety so we can save on gas.

Hill: When does a Police Officer's shift actually start?

Herrick: When we get to the town line of Richmond.

Hill: The commute is off-shift until about the last 5 miles. If they came to the Town Center first, it would be a delay of 15 minutes. I think a significant percentage of U.S. Police Officers drive to work and get in a cruiser at their work station.

Furr amended the motion to enter into a public bidding process to sell the Tesla police cruiser with a minimum bid of \$42,000. Hill accepted amendment. Sander seconded. Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston in favor. Forward, Sander not in favor. Hill abstains. Motion is not approved.

Review of FY23 Q2 financial reports

Heston: My first question is on the reappraisal grant and the expenses. There was a legal expense that needs to be addressed.

Bona: The reappraisal was a budgeting thing during FY23 over a year ago so I cannot change the budgeted amount line. The legal amount will be corrected.

Heston: The interest earned is so much more than FY22. I need some explanation on "3h06 FY23 QTR 2 Backup 3 Detailed Transaction Report.pdf"

Bona: This is our revenue line. The Muni Payment and State Adjustments are things I manually enter into the General Ledger. The State is saying how much to reduce how much people owe you because we are going to send it to the school directly.

Heston: I also want to understand the difference between total taxes on 3h07 FY23 QTR 2 Backup 4 Cash Receipts Report.pdf and 3h08 FY23 QTR 2 Backup 5 Tax Statues Report.pdf. What is that?

Bona: One is for all years that money is coming in while the other one is just FY23, I think. The Cash Receipts report is what we have actually received in tax payments. The Status Report is what we have billed. The Cash Receipts report is for multiple years as well.

Heston: It is confusing.

Bona: This is going to show the off-sets to education taxes that the State is telling us to mark it as paid. One is cash receipts or what I am physically getting from people coming to the Office. The other is cash receipts and what the State is saying to reduce the amount due by.

Heston: I will set up a separate time to talk about it. On page 2 of “3h10 FY23 QTR 2 Balance sheet funds 25-73.pdf”, where was the Money Market allocated to? Can you get me the details on that?

Bona: The detail would show in the trial balance for the various funds. We can discuss that as well.

Heston: On pg 10, where did the Tax Sale Proceeds go?

Bona: It is all done. When we have a tax sale, we hold it in a non-interest-bearing account for a year. The back taxes got paid. That \$5,024.03 is more than what was owed in back taxes.

Heston: On pg 31, have we not spent anything under Records Restoration yet?

Bona: We also have a budget line for some of the stuff Linda has done.

Arneson: We have been hitting it out of the regular budget rather than the reserves. We can look into it and see. There was a grant at one point.

Heston: On pg 1 of “3h11 FY23 QTR 2 Trial Balance funds 10 - 15.pdf”, how does it happen that we have a negative in Accounts Receivable?

Bona: I will double check, but it might be the people who over-pay and get money back.

Heston: On pg 2, under Admin Revenue, in line 10-6-10 Net Interest on investments, why is it -\$34,000.

Bona: That is the excess of what we budgeted. It is because revenue is a credit.

Heston: We will find a time to go through that.

LaBounty: Why did the excavator have two different lines?

Bona: One of them is the deposit which we raised taxes to make. The other is for the rest of it where we used unassigned funds to off-set. We are not putting the line that is being covered by unassigned funds in the budget.

Furr: I suggest we swap the next two agenda items as some people are waiting to discuss the traffic calming studies on Cochran Rd.

Heston: Is that alright with the Selectboard? Ok.

Summary of traffic calming studies on Cochran Rd.

Arneson: We have had a lot of different discussions and studies, both in the past, ongoing, and still to come, regarding traffic calming on Cochran Rd. Here is a short summary of next steps and timeline in this process.

*CCRPC is working on a study to be completed by June 2023 to advise on location of temporary traffic control measures. This will likely focus on temporary speed humps and painting. They will help us figure out where those should be.

*We have a request to CCRPC to work on a longer-term study to be completed by June 2024 which would be a corridor study for all of Cochran Rd. along with focused scoping for the 25 mile per hour sections at either end of Cochran Rd. It is likely that this project will be approved by CCRPC, but it has not yet been officially approved. This study will produce suggestions and locations for permanent traffic calming measures.

*CCRPC will conduct a traffic count in April or May in both 25 mph zones and in the 45-mph zone of Cochran Rd. This data will help to inform both studies 1) the temporary traffic control measures, and 2) the corridor and scoping study. This will be conducted prior to installation of speed humps as the data will help determine the location of the speed humps for a temporary basis.

*The Selectboard has expressed a desire to install radar speed feedback signs on either end of Cochran Rd. as soon as possible. CCRPC should have a recommendation for specific locations of these within a couple of weeks. This will hopefully slow traffic and the traffic count study will be affected by this, but in discussion with CCRPC we felt it was worth implementing this measure ASAP to try to make some more immediate change to speeds on Cochran Rd. There are two other radar speed feedback signs as you enter the 25 mph zones coming from the middle.

I can post this on Front Porch Forum and our website.

Hill: We are trying to do things quickly to get things in place. These planning initiatives through CCRPC and elsewhere take months to years.

Wells: That is really helpful to have that list. The Transportation Committee is doing a study about the intersection of Cochran Rd. and Bridge St. How does that fit in?

Arneson: We have talked about that intersection in regards to the radar speed feedback signs. Last summer we also looked at a teardrop island. It might be conceptual.

Furr: CCRPC will give us some guidance on that.

Arneson: I will follow up with Cathleen and Chris, the Chairs of the Transportation Committee.

Update on parking issues on West Main St. near Richmond Family Medicine and Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church

Arneson: We previously mentioned that this area used to be a no-parking zone on Rt 2. Ian Degutis, the VTrans State Traffic Engineer, stated that in 2005 the Town asked for

that to be rescinded and it was. Then in 2010, the Town asked for the No Parking zone to be reinstated but that request was declined by the Traffic Committee. He assured me that the Committee looks at current conditions and current safety issues. The Selectboard should outline the current safety issues as well as possible. He would help support it if he saw that safety issue. It would then go to the Traffic Committee with new evidence about what is going on in this area. Our next step is to inform residents and business owners in that area about this item at our next meeting. We can gather more information and write a formal letter.

Heston: The 2010 denial was based on evidence that there were no accidents. We may get the same answer.

Hill: It is clear to me we need to look at actual accident data. They do not look at close calls. The light by Rt 2 and 117 was put in based on the number of accidents and glass on the road. I am not defending or assailing it.

Forward: Are the VTrans Traffic Committee meetings public meetings? Can our residences and business owners provide input?

Arneson: Yes. One meeting that I went to there was an opportunity to provide feedback.

Heston: We have to provide evidence first. We will ask for feedback at our next meeting.

Hill: We should have a sense of the community if that is what they want.

Discussion of forming a gardening committee

Heston: This came up at an ARPA meeting. It was discussed that perhaps a Gardening Committee could be formed.

Furr: The genesis of this came from a lot of ARPA suggestions that came down to the beautification of Volunteers Green and other parts around Town. If people want to be on a Committee then they could decorate around the Welcome to Richmond sign and plant flowers here.

Forward: I also heard there was interest in Community Vegetable Gardens which are two different things.

LaBounty: I remember that ARPA talked about should we put Community Gardens at the Volunteers Green. The Recreation Committee said they were not going to tackle that and we could have a Gardening Committee. I think it was more where people could grow vegetables in a patch.

Furr: I might be conflating my discussions with Mary Houle in the hallway and in the ARPA meetings. The rest of Chittenden County has much larger scale opportunities. I think there would be interest and we could also look at beautification.

Heston: Should we add this to the list of Committee Members?

Forward: We are not getting a lot of requests for this. It needs to be driven by people who want to serve on a standing committee. We need to develop a charge for the committee. I do not think we will be successful.

Furr: We could look to see if there is interest. We do not have a staff to run a Community Garden. If no one does then it answers are question.

Hill: Most committees are formed based on a group of people looking to focus on something. We can put it out there as an option for someone to be a founding chair.

Furr: One of us can post to Front Porch Forum seeking interest in a community gardening and beautification program and project committee. I would be happy to do it.

Mather: Pete Gosselin and I had previous conversations about creating a catalog of the perenial plants the Town is charged with caring for. Mowing lawns and caring for shrubs is not the same thing. There was talk of forming a committee to care for those but then we had the pandemic. There was interest from the public in caring for perennial plants. Vegetable gardens are different skills sets and people interested in doing it.

Heston: We should start with a post on Front Porch Forum to see if anyone is interested.

Furr: I will post it.

Update from Water and Sewer Commission regarding the Gateway water and wastewater expansion project

Hill: What might happen in the Gateway or elsewhere in terms of affordable housing and senior housing has gotten attention from the Governors Office on down. There are not many opportunities to develop affordable housing. It requires a certain scale and water/sewer on site. Jay and I talked to Taylor Newton of CCRPC. I have called Cathedral Square Corporation and Champlain Housing Trust. The Gateway is where there is one potential site.

Furr: Taylor from CCRPC said some Gateway lots are suitable for affordable housing units.

Hill: It might get support if it is part of a plan for affordable housing and senior housing.

Forward: Most affordable housing developers are non-profit. Cathedral Square Corporation and Champlain Housing Trust are in the model. They have expertise for finding tax credits for social good.

Hill: I would be willing to have some conversation between a property owner and the Cathedral Square Corporation and Champlain Housing Trust and CCRPC. We could also include Virginia Clarke from the Planning Commission.

Heston: We are just having a conversation.

Furr: Is there something we should be doing that we are not doing. That is when we were advised to talk to Champlain Housing Trust and CCRPC.

LaBounty: When you approach other properties can we also talk to Buttermilk on the existing water and sewer.

Hill: I offered Buttermilk to meet with them and Champlain Housing Trust and Cathedral Square and it did not pan out.

Heston: We will be having a meeting with them to get those details. We will look at investing some money on a project.

Forward: There was a Housing Committee meeting on January 12th, and they talked about many of these issues.

Follow up on using Camel's Hump Middle School and Richmond Elementary School as emergency overnight shelters

Arneson: On January 23, I met with officials from the Red Cross, Vermont Agency of Human Services, and Vermont Emergency Management to get more information on emergency shelters for Richmond Elementary School and Camels Hump Middle School. They think there is one Town in Vermont that is ready on its own with own equipment. There are three levels of Red Cross Shelters:

*A Red Cross Managed Shelter is run by the Red Cross with support from the State

*A Red Cross Partnered Shelter is run by the municipality with supplies and some staff provided by the Red Cross.

*A Red Cross Supported Shelter is run by the municipality with supplies supplied by the Red Cross but no staff is supplied by the Red Cross.

The next steps are to have the Red Cross conduct a survey of both Richmond Elementary School and Camels Hump Middle School which hasn't happened since 2014. This survey is scheduled for Thursday, February 9. This survey will document existing conditions at each location. This will include assessing if there is current infrastructure for a generator and assistance in determining the proper generator to install. I hope to have more information after Thursday. The principals are aware it is listed as our shelter. We will have those conversations after the survey.

Heston: We are required to review and update the Emergency Plan.

Review advertisement for Committee appointments

Arneson: Duncan looked back at previous advertisements and updated them for current vacancies. We will start community outreach by emailing current members, posting on Front Porch Forum, and putting in the Times Ink. We will allow each Committee to review and make recommendations to the Selectboard except for the DRB. By May, the Selectboard considers these approvals. We can ask for longevity in each appointment this year. Does anything need to be changed? We can start the process. We can put in a link to the website that shows who is up for appointment.

Staffing update

Arneson: This is from October to the end of December.
Administration - Fully staffed, no changes.

Highway - Fully staffed, no changes.

Police - Currently there is the Chief position, one full time position, and three part time positions open in the Police Department.

Library - No updates since last update. Minimal staffing needs have been met.

Planning and Zoning - Town Planner Ravi Venkataraman has resigned. The position has been posted and we have been receiving some applications.

Water and Sewer - Allen Carpenter continues as the Interim Water and Wastewater Superintendent, we were unable to agree to terms on the top two candidates we interviewed so the position remains open, Brad Snow will become the Process Operator as fully licensed on the water side of our plant.

2022 Statistics and Quarterly update from Richmond Rescue

Heston: The PowerPoint was excellent.

Forward: It seems like the questions they ask would be applicable to Police and Fire.

Heston: Jay is compiling some data to put on the website.

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes

*Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 1/17/23 as presented. Furr seconded.
Roll Call Vote to follow discussion.*

Heston: I have one change on the last line of pg. 5. Strike the “We can do the Audit after December.” Then pg. 10 under the Police Chief 1st paragraph “that this could be a temporary but years-long position”. Then “it will take at least a couple of years if we want to pursue a Union Municipal District”

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor.

Purchase Orders: None

Warrants

Heston: What are fringes? It might be health care.

Forward: The last two pages of Payroll Invoices the employee contribution is less than the deduction. If you go up to the next one, then employee contribution is more. Why would they be different?

Arneson: This is the retirement which the deduction out of the employee’s paycheck and what the Town is putting in on top of that.

Hill: It is assigned by the group in VMERS. Police can retire earlier.

Heston: Can you explain the Chappell invoice?

Arneson: They cannot just void that previous invoice out, so they are giving us a credit. We are applying that credit to our next purchase.

Heston: There is a tax charge on one of the Staples receipts. They used the card, so I do not understand. We don't have to get into it. It was charged under Highway. Do we have any progress for coding in NEMRC?

Arneson: We have added details for the Legal by different projects.

Heston: It will be important for ARPA too. Let's put that on our agenda. There is a late fee on VGS. One Iroquois receipt looks destroyed. I wrote down Quadient because I talked to Linda, and they are just doing letters. If you want a meter, then you have to go through a vendor. I looked at Pitney-Bowes and it seemed cheaper, but do we need a meter?

Arneson: For tax bills, we need something faster.

Furr: You have to sort by zip-code.

Heston: You can get a bulk permit and it is a fraction of the cost.

Arneson: There is value in being able to track codes.

Hill: The coding questions should be on the future agenda item as it is a recurring question.

Furr moved to approve the general warrants as presented from 2/6/2023. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Discuss Items for Next Agenda

- *NEMRC Project Coding
- *Traffic Ordinance
- *Audit Review
- *Public Comment for Rt 2 Parking
- *Gardening update
- *Emergency Shelter Site visit

Adjournment

Sander moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:22 pm

Chat file from Zoom: None