

**Town of Richmond
Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of May 1, 2023**

Members Present: David Sander, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, Lisa Miller

Absent: Bard Hill

Staff Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager; Connie Bona, Finance Director; Benjamin Herrick, Interim Police Chief; Anthony Cambridge, Hinesburg Police Chief

Others Present: Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Allen Knowles, Andrew Bessette, Angela Cote, Bob Stafford, Cara LaBounty, Colin Heskett, Denise Barnard, Jack Linn, Jenna Baker, Jennifer Heskett, Judy Bush, June Heston, Karen Yaggy, Karl Goetze, Katie Mather, Laurie Dana, Lynne Knowles, Mary Houle, Matthew Parisi, Nik Ponzio, Rachel's iPad, Susan Wells, Virginia Clarke

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Welcome by: Furr

Public Comment: None

Additions or Deletions to Agenda:

Furr: Cara LaBounty has a request to move agenda item

(n) Follow up on reappraisal process
to between (h) & (i)

h) Consideration of approval of proposed amendments to Zoning Regulations for Village Residential/Commercial District and Gateway Residential/Commercial District and associated amendments* # (15 min)

i) Consideration of approval of a Letter of Intent for the Grant in Aid program* # (5 min)

Forward: The Approve Proposed Amendments to Zoning Regulations is set for 15 minutes. We have a lot of timely issues after that, I would encourage us to try to stick to the 15 minutes.

LaBounty: Can I move (n) to before (h).

Furr: Any problems with that?

Sander: I will move (n) to above (h).

Arneson: The last agenda item can be an update to the Historic Preservation Grant.

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Recognition of Collin Roy Heskett for attaining the rank of Eagle Scout

Furr: Colin Heskett is here as a new Eagle Scout. Colin and his family have relocated to St. Albans but did complete his Eagle Scout with Richmond Troop. He's here tonight to tell us a little bit about his Eagle Scout project.

Heskett: I worked with the St. Albans Historical Society on a project that we call the Our Historic Church St. We fundraise for the repair and upkeep of the five historical buildings on Church Street, they are upwards of 200 years old. We basically bought a bunch of signs that will tell the history of the buildings. I got Troop 23 all the way up to St. Albans and worked with Troop 70, a co-ed Troop. This will help raise money for the restoration and upkeep of the buildings. They're putting pamphlets in the various visitor centers around the State about this project. There is going to be a festival on July 20th.

Houle: Congratulations on your big effort. I'm just so proud that you were able to complete this project.

Miller: A round of applause!

Furr: Thank you for coming and good luck with everything.

Consideration of appointing Keith Osborne as the Acting Zoning Administrative Officer

Arneson: This is for the Acting Zoning Administrative officer position. This allows Keith to fill in when our Zoning Administrative Officer is out of the office for multiple days. He was nominated by the Planning Commission for this role, and now it's with the Selectboard to consider for approval.

Forward moved to appoint Director of Planning and Zoning Keith Osborne as the Acting Zoning Administrative Officer. Sander seconded.

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

Consideration of approval of Radiate Art Crawl

Furr: The Radiate Art Center has been holding this annually. They have asked that we authorize them to hold this year's event again at the Town Center campus/parking lot, on Sunday, September 24, from 10am to 3pm. Judy Bush is here to tell us a little bit.

Bush: I'm really just here to answer any questions you have. It'd be the same pretty much as last year.

Forward moved to approve the Radiate Art Crawl to be held at the Town Center campus on Sunday, September 24 from 10am – 3pm. Sander seconded.

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

Consideration of adopting a non-binding resolution on safe sharing of the road

Furr: Nick Ponzio brought to us a resolution essentially centered on the idea that all residents of Richmond who use our Town roads should be aware of the law and policies relating to the sharing of the road. We discussed it for a bit and decided to table it to put

it into the traditional form that we usually see (https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3d_Non-Binding_Resolution_In_Support_Of_Safe_Sharing_of_the_Roadways_-_DRAFT_4-27-23.pdf).

Forward moved to approve the non-binding resolution of safe sharing of the road. Miller seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion.

Furr: This was an attempt on my part to add the relevant State laws where appropriate. That is a draft and open to amend it.

Forward: I think you captured it well. I would like to ask Nick Ponzio if this fulfills his original intent.

Ponzio: It does. I think it's a real good summary of what we're looking for and I appreciate that.

Sander: I like how it's balanced. It states Vermont State law, but it also balances common sense expectations. I like that it respects common sense and courtesy on both sides.

Ponzio: I just wanted to be clear that there are State laws around the safe sharing of the roadways.

Knowles, A: I just want to voice my support for this.

Furr: There is one change that needs to be made which is the word running or the phrase pedestrians walking or running.

Wells: The Transportation Committee has assigned a subcommittee for the Share the Road project to basically advertise what this resolution says.

Forward: I support that notion.

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

Consideration of creating a Parade and Fireworks Reserve Fund

Furr: Historically, the Parade and Fireworks Committee was essentially a group of mostly friends and family who had been doing this for close to 30 years. They received funding for the event through coin drops. The Town agreed to move to create the Parade and Fireworks Committee into the traditional committee structure. They essentially gave to the Town the money that they hadn't spent and also gave us the equipment. In return, the Town agreed to pay in full for the Fireworks. We have two trailers and a shed out back at the Highway Department. One of the trailers contains several fryolators. We have a whole bunch of bins. We took inventory on Saturday. This year we will recruit non-profits and for-profit vendors to set up food trucks and stuff. There's no need to own all that stuff anymore. The Parade and Fireworks Committee, along with the Fire Department, is allowed to do 2 coin drops per year. Besides the coin drop, can we go to

the Front Porch Forum to ask for people to donate money toward the event. We checked with our Town auditor. In order to accept that money, the best way would be to establish a Reserve fund. The money would not flow through the Parade and Fireworks, Duncan Wardwell will be in charge of setting the form up to take donations. Then it would be piled into a fund. That money would be used for expenses other than the fireworks itself.

LaBounty: I was one who was strongly pushing for it to no longer have a fundraising piece and that the Town actually pay for the fireworks and maybe have a small budget. As far as the actual Reserves go, I think it should be a budgeted item annually and that we should not set aside Reserves. They should be charging the vendors a fee and that fee should generate enough revenue to pay for what they didn't get donated. How much you're able to spend is exactly how much they're bringing in revenue.

Furr: Nonetheless, we need the fund to legally hold the money that comes in and keep it legally distinct from the Town's other numbers. The fireworks have already been paid for by the Town. This would be a fund to keep income raised by charging vendors and to take donations. As a member of the Committee, I would like to see us have a place to do that. The auditor said it would be cleaner legally if we had a fund for that money directly.

Forward: I hear Cara's concern and I understand all of the challenges to have separate funds for separate different things.

Arneson: We reached out to our auditor and his advice was the best way to do a fundraiser is to have a Reserve fund. I think that helps us keep track of it a little bit better. Right now, we don't have an expense line that has enough money in it to pay additional fees. Nor do we have a revenue line specifically set up for this. This is a fund that will be established by the Selectboard. You can take the money out, do other things with it at your own political peril. It's not like it's tied to a statute like Reserve money for Highway.

Forward: I think of Reserved for kind of big ticket items. Little funds seem difficult to administer.

Furr: It's a fallacy to say that creation of one fund requires us to create a whole bunch of other funds. We are still not looking to taxpayers to pay for it. We would like to have a financially clean way of taking donations.

Mather: I'd like to ask if there is an easy way for us to add a donation button to the website. Often when there's a coin drop, I can't make a donation because I don't have any money. Connie Bona made it clear that it would not be a clean accounting process. My advice is to find a way to notate what this thing is and how it got created and why.

Barnard: If you do this, I would change the name instead of Parade and Fireworks to July 4th. If you do have to rent equipment, it's not for the Parade and it's not the Fireworks. Something so it doesn't tie your hands for how you can use the funds.

LaBounty: The whole reason for having to set up taking donations is a reason for setting up the Reserve. It all changed because they used to have their own checkbook. They never reported any financials to you. It was not a clear, transparent way of doing things.

There were a lot of issues there. I strongly pushed to do away with that fundraising aspect, to have a clear transparent line on how much money was going to be spent. I will come forward wanting the Town to be able to raise money for a specific thing in the Town that I think we need. I would want to have the same situation taken in that case. It's just like taking donations for a non-profit, you have background checks on anybody handling the money. You have a lot more things that you have to do when taking donations. Town Officials should be the ones counting the money.

Furr: We keep making reference to moving the cost of this to Town budget, that was the only the fireworks. I could go for quite a while for things that are going to cost money that are not the fireworks. We could put this on the Town budget and fund it directly. Duncan would be the one working with the money. It will be going into the Town books. I think having a July 4th fund is not a real head scratcher.

Heston: Why couldn't you continue to put this money in the Recreation account and code it as money to be used for July 4th? If by chance there is no parade down the road, you can still use it for Recreation.

Forward moved to create the July 4th Fund which will be used to pay for expenditures related to the Richmond July 4th Celebration. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion.

Miller: I've never seen the Town's fireworks display. I spend it in the basement with earplugs in because it physically hurts my ears. I'm not putting a penny of my taxes into buying something that hurts me like that.

Furr: This is for everything except fireworks.

Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Sander in favor. Miller abstains. Motion approved.

Furr: I want to validate what you're saying because I do have concerns about that. I'm an animal lover and I have known people with a dog that will not go out for a walk for a month after the fireworks. If there is a way that we can do quieter fireworks, I think that's something that could be looked at.

Consideration of approval of a coin drop to be held by the Parade and Fireworks Committee on May 27 from 8am – 3pm

Furr: Our next agenda item is to legally allow the July 4th Parade and Fireworks Committee to have a coin drop. The coin drop does annually raise somewhere in the order of \$4,000 if it's good weather. I volunteered for it last year, I had a great time talking to people if they came through. This is going to be the only coin drop. The coin drop would be held at the intersection of Bridge St and Main St and Jericho Rd from 8am to 3pm on Saturday, May 27. Any questions about the coin drop or any other comments relating to it?

Sander moved to approve the coin drop to be held by the 4th of July Parade and Fireworks Committee on Saturday, May 27 from 8am – 3pm at the traffic signal on Bridge St. Forward seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion.

LaBounty: Make sure you do all the background checks for people handling the money. I was talking about the coin drops and how you properly handled the funds and if somebody will represent the Town.

Furr: I will be there. We had a great time last year.

Forward: This is a great Vermont tradition.

Miller: Do we know what the condition of Rt 2 is going to be?

Furr: We've invited the project representative from the State to come speak to us at a future meeting.

Arneson: They're coming to talk about the bridge project. They copied their project manager about what they think the condition will be on July 4th.

Furr: For the coin drop, they don't work on Saturday. That part of the Town they were going to work at night. The road may be gravel or slab but the road will be open in both directions.

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

Consideration of creating a Town Center Assistant Maintenance and Flower Bed Maintenance position

Arneson: Mary has attended to the flowerbeds around the Town Center. This year being no exception, she takes a lot of care and pride in planting and tending to the flower beds throughout the entire summer season. She also jumps in at times and identifies when to clean the entryway to the Town Center. The idea of creating a paid position that would spend about roughly 5 hours a week or more this summer, a little less in the wintertime, to attend to the flower beds here at the Town Center and some of these other jobs that aren't getting attended. These aren't really covered by any one person in particular. Mary came up with a draft job description. Would the Selectboard like to create that position which is not budgeted so we would be overspending the budget. It would probably be about \$5,000-\$6,000 per year, including wages and associated taxes. We'd go through a process with any new job to post it and accept applicants and make a decision.

Houle: Pennie Rand echoed the justification for this job two weeks ago when she was talking about certain things that aren't done. I'm not going to be able to do this forever. If it is a paid position and it's established there are certain things that are not done by the person who's cleaning offices. I've received a lot of compliments on the new flower addition, and I just couldn't be happier with the way it turned out.

Sander: Mary, it looks beautiful. This building should present what we want the Town to look like and it does hurt when I see things.

Forward: The latest draft of the site plan for the Town Center includes a lot more greenspace and parking. One of the things that the Town Center Committee has talked about is a need for a facilities maintenance. I don't see in this job description changing

light bulb. Somebody needs to pay attention and it shouldn't be Pete.

Houle: It shouldn't be Josh or Duncan or Linda either.

Forward: I think this is a good experiment to try to do it, particularly for the landscaping. I had a couple of changes to the job description. What does the last qualification mean, situations endangering personal safety?

Houle: Things that you would notice in your home that would be a hazard. If there's a tripping hazard like that log that was situated out here in the parking lot.

Furr: We can create the position and leave the specific job descriptions to be flushed out.

Heston: I feel like it is a very valuable position. We have been very fortunate to have Mary dedicate so much time. With a potentially new Town Center, you reevaluate at that point. I don't think you have to be concerned about creating a position that's permanent because budgets make the determination of what positions stay in place.

Mather: I would also really like to thank Mary for all the work that she's already done at Town Center. I also totally agree that we should create this position as an official position. I'm not convinced that the Master Gardener position should be tied to the taking care of light cleaning in the Town Center. When I was on the Selectboard, I asked for inventory of all of the Town owned green spaces that includes perennial plants. I'd be interested in seeing this position expanded over time.

Arneson: Once we get to the budget process this fall into next Town Meeting, we would include this position in that part of the payroll budget.

Sander moved to create the Town Center Assistant Maintenance and Flower Bed Maintenance position to be placed as Grade 2 on the pay grid. Forward seconded. Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.

Follow up on reappraisal process

Arneson: I wanted to show where this information can be found on the website (<https://www.richmondvt.gov/departments/listers>)

This information did get mailed to people. There's information on the hearing process, the dates and times, how to get in touch, how to make an appointment, what to do if you can't make an appointment, how to email for information, or call for more information.

Forward: I was pleased to get it. It was shocking numbers, interesting information. The numbers went up proportionately for everybody.

Furr: The increase in your appraisal may not result in an increase in your taxes at all. The amount of money to be raised for the budget has not changed. It's simply the grand list expand, and the rate goes down to achieve the same result.

LaBounty: Don't forget your State taxes if you have a percentage increase, your taxes are going up in all likelihood. I've asked for information that should be accessible and transparent to the public, such as the land schedules, the depreciation schedules, the

neighborhood identifiers, the quality specifications, all of these are driving how they calculate the information. If you want to appeal, you need to have some of that information. I don't have the information I need for my Monday meeting. It has historically been in the Grand List book land schedule. You're supposed to have that information available to present why you're appealing. It could be on our website, anybody could download the information.

Arneson: I'll follow up to make sure that she gets that to you. I will ask her about publishing on the website, a very reasonable request.

Houle: I agree we should have all the information. If we have all the information and it can be resolved at that meeting, there's no need to go to a formal grievance.

LaBounty: The bottom line is you don't have information for the public that should be transparent to the public and as a Selectboard member you should be aware.

Arneson: I will follow up with Lisa on the website to make sure they get answers.

Barnard: That is a huge chunk of information that is missing. It never gave a location and actual address. That document is daunting. We have left out such pertinent information.

LaBounty: It was the road codes and I've asked for that information on the website.

Linn: It seems very rushed to me. They've been working on that for two years and we get a little less than a month to do the research.

Arneson: I think we're already on a program to get this ready and done for this Grand List this year. If an individual property owners' appeal takes longer, that can always be changed.

Consideration of approval of proposed amendments to Zoning Regulations for Village Residential/Commercial District and Gateway Residential/Commercial District and associated amendments

Furr: There were a lot of statements in support of the proposed Zoning Regulations for the Gateway Residential/Commercial and the Village Residential/Commercial. However, toward the end of the meeting, Karl Goetze had some concerns about the inclusion of certain parcels going north along Jericho Rd. We agreed to close the hearing and not take action at that time. We also have Chair of the Planning Commission, Virginia Clark, here. Virginia, what would be your recommendation? Should we have Carl speak to his proposed changes? We haven't legally proposed the changes, we had a request.

Goetze: I want to say I very much appreciate all the work. I am at 62 Jericho Rd. I know a lot of my neighbors use the sidewalk all the time as do kids going to school. It's a very walkable neighborhood. I support affordable housing and I see the need for that. I think that some of the most affordable housing is in that part of Jericho Rd. My concern is about making it inadvertently appealing for Commercial use. I support the part about adding more units at an increased density.

Clarke: Lisa, Keith and I walked up Jericho Rd and looked at all the properties along this section. We then submitted a list of pros and cons for the Selectboard. There's very little

place that development can happen. It's a very difficult place to develop, the lower part, the lots on the left-hand side as you're going north slope down instantly towards Baker and Tilden St. There's no room to turn vehicles around. We considered requiring that any Commercial use have a turnaround. Currently all the residents is in that section, there's no room for them to turn around either. All those residents are actually driving backwards across the sidewalk. On the right-hand side as you're going north, those properties slope up towards the highway. It was difficult for us to conceive of it making any difference one way or the other. No matter what you allow, there aren't that many lots that you could actually do anything with. I think the option here is just not to do anything with this neighborhood, to not put it into the R/C district and to leave it in the high-density Residential district, which actually allows for a lot of business opportunities.

Furr: Virginia, made reference to the pros and cons that we have in the packet (https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3h11_Memo_-_Village_RC_District_-_Pros_and_Cons_of_including_Jericho_Road_parcel.pdf) The options that we have are we do nothing and consider voting to accept the proposed changes as they were originally presented. Or we can make changes and specify certain lots that we would not include. We would probably want to send that back to the Planning Commission so they could update the Ordinances and send them back to us, at which point we would have another hearing. After that hearing, we could then vote to adopt.

Clarke: You're required to send it back and we'll change the maps as well.

Parisi: I think the likelihood of any Commercial development along that side is highly irregular. There's not enough housing density. The more likely scenario along Jericho Rd access, here's potentially more housing as mother-in-law apartments, etc. This is part of a Statewide issue, if not a Nationwide issue. Vermont faces a 30,000-to-40,000-unit shortage, according to Vermont Housing Finance Agency. Can Richmond alleviate this on their own? Obviously not. Can we make a slight difference and help it out? Maybe yes. The only way to maybe stem that is to create more housing. I think Richmond can do this in a small extent, with making these changes. There's going to be no way to control the rent increases. There's obviously a significant demand in the Chittenden County area for more housing density.

Clarke: The way we have presented the R/C district, there's not really a way to separate out the Commercial and Residential, it's a mixed-use district. It doesn't make sense for us to put Jericho Rd in a special district that just has multifamily housing allowance and no commercial. We will be able to address that when we talk about the residential neighborhoods and the HDR, those are districts that we might not have commercial allowances and might be able to increase the housing. It's not a good idea to make these little, tiny districts that all have their own requirements. So

Forward: I want to make motion to take Jericho Rd Forward moved to take Jericho Rd out of the Village Residential/Commercial district and put it back in the High-Density Residential district.

Arneson: It would be from JR0047 on the west side north to JR0052 on the east side north.

Forward moved to take Jericho Rd from Main Street to School Street out of the Village Residential/Commercial district for this Zoning and put it back in the High Density Residential district. Miller seconded.

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

Furr: This is referred back to the Planning Commission to make changes and bring them back to us. We'll hold another hearing and take it from there.

Clarke: There's one other change that the Planning Commission recommends that recommend we make

(https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3h12_5.1.23_Multiple_structures_on_a_Lot_--_changes_for_SB_to_consider__2_.pdf)

We're recommending that we allow two principal structures on a lot. This is like having a duplex only it is not connected. This is to allow a little more flexibility in terms of putting more housing. We had it as a Permitted use but based on discussions, we feel that it should be a Conditional use. It seemed like having it as a Conditional use, which would require the process by the DRB with hearings. It seemed like it was wiser at this point in time. We are recommending that you put in this language along with an attorney's review of such changes. When you have the two lots on a property, we need to have the legal arrangements that makes sense. We would like it to be clear that it's the applicant's responsibility for the attorney to review it.

Forward moved to approve changes to 3.3.3, 3.3.5(d)ii, 3.4.3, 3.4.5(d)ii as presented by the Chair of the Planning Commission. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion.

Knowles, A: I'm not sure when the discussions about the Permitted versus Conditional use for two principal dwellings took place. I strongly object to moving that from Permitted to Conditional. It just simply results in people connecting separate structures by breezeways. I simply advocate keeping it with the initial proposal that you could have two principal structures.

Parisi: This could now take months and months more. I'm a little bit frustrated that it is based on a small majority, regarding potential Commercial zoning on the Jericho Rd portion of this. The entire Zoning district is now months or more has to be essentially reviewed by the Planning Commission. Now they'll have public meetings again, as well.

Furr: The Planning Commission can make this change at the next meeting and just give it back to us.

Clarke: A change in the extent of the amendment is considered to be a substantive change. We are changing the area that is covered. There's a very tight timeline for getting these changes made and the Selectboard setting up a final hearing. It's a very short amount of time that we have to make these changes. We don't have any more input into it. We don't have any more public hearings. We just have to make the changes that the Selectboard has recommended and send it back to the Selectboard.

Furr: There has to be a legal public hearing. If I understand correctly, it could be a Selectboard agenda item, provided we properly warn it.

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

Furr: We do have a letter here from Sydney Miller, the owner of the Goodwin Baker building

(https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3h13_email_from_Sidney_Miller.pdf). We don't need to make any changes because this is already in the proposed district.

Clarke: This would allow him 11 units that would still be some Commercial space. He's looking at losing 50% of his Commercial, so we would give him some other opportunities.

Forward: And as I understand this email, he supports the changes as presented by the Planning Commission.

Consideration of approval of a Letter of Intent for the Grant in Aid program

Furr: This is a State grant program that provides funding for municipalities to complete work related to the municipal road general permit related to stormwater control. The program is provided between 20,000-\$35,000 in the past.

Arneson: This is work that we're mandated to do, and we do every year anyway. This grant helps us towards that goal.

Miller moved to approve the Letter of Intent to participate in the FY24 Grant in Aid Program and to name Town Manager Josh Arneson as the Grant Program Manager. Sander seconded.

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

Consideration of recommending to the Treasurer to purchase of a 6-month certificate of deposit

Furr: In February, the Selectboard moved to recommend that our treasurer Jim Feinson purchase a six-month certificate of deposit in the amount of \$500,000 in March of 2023. The Selectboard also moved to recommend the purchase of six-month CDs in the amount of \$500,000 in May and July, subject to review by the Selectboard prior to each purchase. Following are the interest rates as they stood on Thursday, April 27. Actual interest rates may vary at the time of purchase. Three-months CD 4.5%, six-month 4.5%, nine-month 4.25% and 12-month 4.20%.

Sander moved to recommend that the Town Treasurer move \$500,000 of Town funds into a six-month certificate of deposit in May 2023. Forward seconded.

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

Consideration of approval of Drinking Water State Revolving Fund planning application for water service line inventory

Furr: The mandated Town inventory of water service lines is essentially to find out how much lead is out there. There are a lot of cast iron pipes that date back decades and are pretty rotten. The State wants every town to inventory this. This particular amount of money, if it is granted, includes 100% forgiveness. It's a loan we don't have to pay back. The Water and Sewer Commission moved to recommend the Selectboard approve this loan.

Miller moved to approve the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund application in the amount of \$43,300. Sander seconded.

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

Consideration of approval or outdoor consumption permit

Sander moved to approve the outdoor consumption permit application from PineMartin LLC doing business as Stones Throw Pizza. Miller seconded.

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

Update on Police Department (possible executive session)

Arneson: There's actually two updates. For the Police Department, one is on a hiring process, one is on the agreement with Hinesburg. Let's start with the update on the Police Chief hiring. We put on Front Porch Forum, the hiring committee looked at 20 applicants for the Police Chief position. We chose seven to interview, four of them accepted those interviews. We selected two we felt were qualified to do the job. One of those candidates dropped out. He needs to go through the process of interview with First Responders as well as a public forum. We will continue to move forward thorough background check and employment will be contingent upon those final pieces coming together.

There are some members of the community that expressed concern about applicant's public record stemming from an arrest back in 2017 for domestic assault. These charges were dismissed, and he continued to work and serve in the field of law enforcement. I've made the decision to postpone the public forum, which was scheduled for this Wednesday. In lieu of that evening, the Williston Community Justice Center will be hosting a listening circle on Wednesday, May 10, from 6-8pm at the Richmond Free Library to communicate with community members, to facilitate circle dialogue, and to share their thoughts and concerns. They'll also be space for private, confidential conversations as well. The Williston Community Justice Center will also be available throughout the day on Wednesday, May 10th for anyone who would like to discuss their concerns over the phone, or for those who are unable to attend the evening circle, or who wish to set up an alternative time to have their voices heard. The Community Justice Center will come up with a report that shows the overall feedback. It is my intention to re-announce the public forum with the candidate after we've had a good listening session.

At the last meeting, the Selectboard approved moving forward with an agreement with Hinesburg to provide some police coverage. We received a letter from the union claiming unfair labor practice and the demand to bargain. After consultation with our attorneys, we made the decision to pause the agreement to make sure that their concerns are addressed. We've been going back and forth on some drafts that I hope to have finalized fairly shortly so that we can get implemented. We want to make sure that we're taking care of our officers, and making sure that their concerns and needs are being met.

Miller: How is it decided to either continue or not continue based on the Community Justice Center?

Arneson: I'm the hiring manager and decide to proceed or not to proceed. This is more of a conversation with the community to understand what concerns or what we might need from policing going forward.

Forward: At what point in the process was the committee made aware of the background of the finalist.

Arneson: I became aware of this after his interview. I looked at it as something that was in his past and that he addressed and overcome five years ago. I did not bring it back up in the committee.

Furr: I think the concern was, if nothing was done, the public forum would not be conducive to finding out truth. By giving people a chance to be heard, does not prevent these topics from being raised but hopefully it doesn't just blow up.

Arneson: It allows for some time for conversation and some emotions to be addressed before we move on to a public forum.

Heston: When I found out that there was this incident, I thought this was something he was accused of, but it was dismissed. I did not see it as something that should impact the hiring process.

Stafford: I am Bob Stafford, I live on Snipe Island Road in Richmond. I'm the one that's been communicating with you over the last week by email and with some of you by telephone. I'm also the Board Chair for the Executive Board for the Williston Community Justice Center. I've been very involved in this process. We're going to supply a report by May 24th. It's going to speak to what we have learned from the people that either call us or personally come in to see us. One of my concerns is that this process will take some time. Until we get a Police Chief here in Richmond, I strongly suggest that we enter into a contract either with the Police Chief from Hinesburg, or with an appropriate law enforcement executive who can administer this Police Department. This Police Department is a mess and it's not being run properly at all. I don't want to see the Town have any more liability. The Criminal Justice Council Rule 13 says that you need to report the mandatory training that is outlined statutorily. The Police Officers did not receive that training. We did not report that. That is negligence.

Furr: The Criminal Justice Council Rule 13 is not a casual serving suggestion from the State, this is important to know.

Stafford: I'll always come to the governing body, including the Town Manager. He's been wonderful to work with on trying to get this listening circle up and running. You would probably want to have somebody who has arrest powers, meaning that they are a certified Police Officer in the State of Vermont. I'm certainly capable of administering this Police Department. I'm not sure that I would want to at this particular time.

Miller: Where should the Chief start? What should they do first or second?

Stafford: I think a new Chief needs to listen to their employees within the department. I think the Chief needs to listen to the other Town employees, I think the Chief needs to reach out to the School Administration to get to know them. If there is a business group within Richmond, then I think the Chief needs to listen to them. You can have listening circles. I believe the Town of Richmond had a Citizens Committee that had no power over the Police Department but came to talk about what they've learned and to be able to take what the message was from the Police Chief and go out into the public and talk about that.

Furr: There is a group that is meeting with the Chief on subjects like data transparency, but they have no formal power.

Heston: The Police Advisory Committee was established under Joe Miller's reign as the Chief in Richmond. Once he retired, that sort of disbanded.

Miller: We require applicants to write a strategic plan. Do we have a plan? I'm hoping that we have something that's expecting the Chief to do certain things, or for that exact reason to build community support and to put networks out.

Forward: One of my hopes through this Community Visioning process is to try to start putting parameters around what we mean by Community Policing. It has to start with the Chief leadership and the kind of Department that we want.

Stafford: Community Policing is a philosophy, it's not a program. Walk and get to know the people. Listen to what they have to say.

Furr: We also got an update from Josh about the Union grievance and about the joint operation with Hinesburg. They do make some good points on the agreement for what it's worth. Do we want to have an Executive Session to ask any questions?

Forward moved to find that premature public knowledge about negotiations with the New England PBA would cause the Town or person to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Miller seconded.

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

Forward moved that we enter into executive session to discuss negotiations with New England PBA under the provisions of 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(b). Sander seconded.

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

Sander moved to exit executive session. Forward seconded.

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

Update from American Rescue Plan Act Committee

Furr: That committee has been evaluating things very carefully. At the next meeting, we hope to vote on five items. Depending on how that vote goes, they would then come to the Selectboard. The Selectboard could make the legal decision. I'm going to share just briefly our project list that is posted on the ARPA website (https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3o_ARPA_Project_Lists.pdf). The color coding is meant to say which ones we have already voted on and recommended to the Selectboard, which ones we have discussed at length and which ones have not been formally presented to the ARPA Committee.

The "Bridge Street Complete Streets," the "Bridge Street East Sidewalk" and the "Municipal Oversight" is really part of the same thing. The "Misc Recreation items" number may come down because the Committee have given us an itemized list but ARPA Committee is not required to support all of it. The "Cemetery Repair of headstone, adding fence and gate," the Cemetery Commission has agreed to front 50% of

the cost. These are all known quantities. The remaining items at the bottom, we still don't have any solid number on how much it would cost to "Digitize the various town records." We don't know how much money for various "Town Center" projects. Then the "MMCTV Contribution for wiring the conference room for audio and video", Josh suggested at \$10,000 donation as an in-kind payment. If you look at the bottom of the spreadsheet this would consist of \$752,000 and leave \$447,000 not allocated. At our meeting on the 15th, we'll probably approve these then it'll be up to the Selectboard. The money must be committed by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.

Forward: I don't have as much problem with the amount for Recreation, but I do have a concern about the process. Work on Volunteers Green is contingent on a robust public engagement process.

Furr: We have to think through carefully just what we're doing. We want to be able to know how much is left of the \$1.2 million.

Richmond Rescue Quarterly Report

Furr: The Richmond Rescue Report is in the packet (https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/04/3p_Richmond_Rescue_Quarterly_Report.pdf)

Michael Chiarella is always available if you have specific questions. They're going to be hiring their fourth full-time employee. The part-time employees work 1000 hours a year. Volunteers have been picking up gaps and the fourth full-time employee will help reduce volunteer stress. They will be able to pay for that new employee by increased revenue brought in by covering Hinesburg and St. George. They have made a number of purchases: response vehicle, LUCAS Devices, and Stair chairs. They only had one injured backcountry skier. They will be taking their 2014 Chevy ambulance for remounting. The financial statement for charitable purposes is on the Town's website.

Forward: I think they're exemplary. One thing that I'm surprised that I don't see in this report is how many calls they got? What were the results?

Furr: I will pull it up from their website (https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16NAXUWfOnmkn5KlRmn2ZuIUmlhaPP7paoS8y6_P_RTQ/edit#gid=0)

Forward: This is the kind of thing that I would love to see from the Police Department. Could we make note that the Selectboard Chair is asking the Town Manager for the Police Chief to respond to that request for data? Some other data that we've asked for is speed data from radar signs.

Vermont State Division of Historic Preservation Grant Update

Arneson: The Selectboard previously approved accepting the Vermont State Division of Historic Preservation Grant for \$14,801. This money will go towards the work that we're doing on the Library exterior. They came to us with a \$20,000 grant. I'll sign it tomorrow and send that into the State to get that done. I just bring that back to the Selectboard and have you officially approve the increased amount at the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes:

Forward: The 4/17/203 Minutes, on pg7, the \$1,000 wasn't for an additional public meeting. On page 11, Hinesburg would be willing to allow us to use their detainee processing.

*Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 4/17/23 as presented. Miller seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

*Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 4/18/23 as presented. Miller seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

Warrants:

*Sander moved to approve the general warrants as presented from 5/1/2023. Miller seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

Purchase Orders: None

Discuss Items for Next Agenda

- *Post Office Circulator Pump
- *Committee Appointments
- *Town Center Library Presentation
- *ARPA
- *Reappraisal update
- *Zoning update
- *Misc Police Stuff

Adjourn

*Sander moved to adjourn. Miller seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

Meeting adjourned at: 10:50 pm

Chat file from Zoom:

01:48:39 matthew parisi: <https://www.vhfa.org/news/blog/30000-40000-more-vermont-homes-needed-2030#:~:text=By%3A%20Leslie%20Black%20Plumeau&text=To%20meet%20expected%20demand%20and,the%20state%20has%20been%20generating>.

02:09:21 Patty Brushett: So much community work. Outstanding Virginia!

02:31:27 Jenna Baker: The lack of transparency and quite frankly the judgement overseeing this process from the town manager is concerning.

02:47:02 Patty Brushett: I agree

02:47:24 Patty Brushett: Orange County is too far away

02:47:48 Jay Furr: no guarantee that any of those deputies lived, there, FWIW

02:51:41 Jenna Baker: Just because they didn't refile the charges against the officer, does not mean he wasn't guilty of putting his hands on that woman. We have had enough troubles with this police department and keeping Chiefs, this is a horrible candidate, I can't believe this is the best option out of 20.

03:48:23 MMCTV Erin Wagg: Follow up on loan payments topic?