

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Special Selectboard Meeting**
3 **Minutes of July 17, 2023**
4

5 **Members Present:** Bard Hill, David Sander, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, Lisa Miller
6

7 **Absent:** None
8

9 **Staff Present:** Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town
10 Manager; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Anthony Cambridge, Hinesburg Police Chief
11

12 **Others Present:** Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Alexis Lathem, Connie Van
13 Eeghen, Denise Noble, Erik, Jack Linn, Martha Nye, Patty Brushett, Wafic Faour
14

15 **MMCTV Video:** <https://archive.org/details/RichmondSelectbd07172023>
16

17 **Call to Order:** 7:02pm
18

19 **Welcome by:** Furr
20

21 **Public Comment:**
22

23 Furr: The Town has been through an unusually rough last week. It would be glib to say
24 that we were very lucky compared to other towns because there's been a lot of damage,
25 especially to people's roads, driveways and crops. I do feel fortunate that we did come
26 through as well as we did. A large part of that is due to the work of our Town workers,
27 the Fire Department, Richmond Rescue, the Highway, and the Water and Sewer
28 departments keeping services going. I also want to thank all volunteers, the people who
29 live here in Richmond who put together the resource spreadsheet, the people who helped
30 each other dig out, pump out the basements. It's nice to see the spirit of community that
31 we always speak about here in New England.
32

33 I also would like to share my condolences with the family of the young lady who was lost
34 in Huntington Gorge the other day. I thank Richmond Rescue and other agencies for
35 their work.
36

37 Hill: I'd like to note the untimely passing of Nicole Killian who served on Richmond
38 Rescue. I think she had just finished her doctoral studies and had served in Richmond
39 Rescue for a number of years.
40

41 Miller: I just have to think back about when the water tank was approved for purchase
42 and construction. It's a good thing we had it. You can imagine it would have been a lot of
43 water trucks in here.
44

45 Sander: The prevailing direction the board went with at the time was we needed it big for
46 fire protection.
47

48 Miller: It was foresight that people didn't realize.
49

50 Linn: Last night's storm will be much more costly to the Town of Richmond than last

51 week's storm. The Selectboard needs to be very careful about the money. I strongly feel
52 we should sell the cruiser cars before they are old. They lose their value, the brakes will
53 seize, mice will get in them. I think you can save a lot of money by getting rid of those.
54

55 Arneson: I received an email from the organizers of the Round Church Women's Run
56 which was scheduled for this coming Sunday. You approved that a couple of months ago.
57 They're going to postpone that and potentially do it sometime in September.
58

59 **Additions or Deletions to Agenda:**

60 Timestamp: 0:05

61 People who participated in discussion: Furr
62

63 **Update on the July 10 – 16, 2023 flooding**

64 Timestamp: 0:05

65
66 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson, Sander, Forward, Hill, Linn,
67 Parent
68

69 Furr stated the discussion would include the water damage from Sunday, July 16.

70 Arneson thanked all Town Staff involved in assisting residents and protecting Town
71 infrastructure.
72

73 Arneson reported that there were 13 single family homes with flooded basements and
74 damaged mechanical units from the July 10-11 flood. These homes are located on Bridge
75 St., Esplanade, East Main St, Cochran Rd. and Johnnie Brook Rd. Arneson reported
76 there was one significant washout on Dugway Rd but the road is passable as of July 12.
77 Volunteers Green was completely flooded but the parking lot and sidewalk held up well.
78 Highway is repairing the playground and will clean the mud off of the park grounds. The
79 Concession Stand was completely flooded and was cleaned out on July 15 and still needs
80 to be disinfected.
81

82 Arneson reported that the wastewater treatment facility ran throughout the flood. The
83 pump station on the other side of the bridge was offline during the event but came back
84 up on July 12 morning. The water pump house was minimally flooded so everything was
85 running off the tank which dropped to 13 feet from 24 feet. The boil water notice was
86 lifted on Saturday, July 15.
87

88 Arneson reported that The Farr Farm, Jericho Settlers Farm, Maple Wind Farm, and
89 Conant farms were all flooded. Arneson thanked resident Susan Whitman for organizing
90 a volunteer effort and google spreadsheet to assist homeowners. Arneson stated that the
91 Fire Department monitored the flood waters on Monday night and evacuated Esplanade
92 and Bridge St. on Tuesday morning. The Fire Department spent most of Wednesday
93 pumping water out of basements for residents. Arneson reported that the Town Center
94 basement and crawl space had about an inch of water with minimal damage. The
95 Highway crew was able to assess roads and open them back up on Wednesday.
96 There was not a lot of road damage during the July 10-11 flood.
97

98 Arneson stated that last night there were two downpours back-to-back of 1.5 inches or
99 more. Highway reported many road washouts. Arneson summarized that Stage Rd,
100 Cochran Rd, Snipe Ireland Rd were closed and that Huntington Rd, Hillview Rd,

101 Williams Hill Rd and Jericho Rd that were reduced to one lane. Arneson also reported
102 lots of driveways and culverts were impacted. All the roads are open as of tonight but are
103 in rough shape, down to one-lane, and Cochran Rd might be closed again for repairs.
104 Arneson reviewed that the first flood was slow water rising on the river and the most
105 recent ones rushed and cut through roads. Arneson estimated that there were 10 more
106 single-family homes with damage.

107

108 Arneson stated that FEMA representatives showed up this morning for individual
109 assistance. There is a phone number on the website to report any damages. Arneson
110 confirmed that FEMA is only gathering data at this point.

111

112 Arneson confirmed that Rod West helped retrieve some of the Volunteers Green
113 dumpsters and pump out basements. The patience and perseverance of residents were
114 also appreciated.

115

116 Furr stated the Volunteers Green parking lot would probably be a crater if it had not been
117 paved. Forward stated that FEMA can be involved in the storm that occurred last night
118 with the previous week's flood as it is considered one disaster declaration. Arneson
119 confirmed that dumpsters had been provided for residents of Esplanade, Johnnie Brook
120 Rd, and East Main St and that we should be able to be reimbursed. Cochran Rd will also
121 need at least one. Sander observed this was the 5th 100-year flood since he has been on
122 the Selectboard. Linn stated that Huntington and Hillview Rds are the worst road
123 damage he has seen in over 45 years. Parent noted that Neighbor Helping Neighbor in
124 Huntington is accepting donations to help neighbors from the recent flooding. Furr noted
125 that Vermont Public has an assistance fund. Furr confirmed that any FEMA employee
126 will have an ID.

127

128 **Employee/Richmond Rescue event**

129 Timestamp: 0:33

130

131 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Forward, Sander, Miller, Brushett

132

133 Furr suggested holding an employee appreciation event. Arneson stated that Linda
134 Parent and Rescue would like to do a weekend while other departments preferred
135 midweek evening. Forward suggested doing this in the fall. Sander stated that our
136 employees are some of the Town's biggest assets. Miller asked about video evidence of
137 the community response. Furr stated that MMCTV had some videos but that we should
138 document something in the Times Ink as well. Brushett was impressed with the
139 comments on Front Porch Forum, the volunteer spreadsheet and suggested a Resilient
140 Richmond celebration for everyone's efforts.

141

142 **Update on discussion with Hinesburg regarding police governance**

143 Timestamp: 0:39

144

145 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Hill, Miller, Forward, Arneson, Cambridge,
146 Van Eeghan

147

148

149

150

151
152 Furr reported that he met with Hill, Arneson, Hinesburg Town Manager Todd Odit and
153 Hinesburg Police Chief Anthony Cambridge on Thursday, July 13. Furr stated that there
154 was a framework for a contract with Hinesburg that would go through the next year.
155 Hinesburg needed some long-term assurances in order to provide consistent coverage.
156
157 Hill stated that Williston and State Police understand that the Department did not have
158 any active officers but that they would engage in dispatch. Hill reported that Willison
159 and the State Police have no interest in contracting for police services with Richmond.
160 They are thin staff but can provide backup or emergency response services but might be
161 more than 45 minutes away. Hill summarized that the year agreement with Hinesburg
162 would allow them to hire or retain officer candidates. Hill stated that Hinesburg has the
163 officers but not the budget and Richmond has the budget but not he officers.
164
165 Hill reviewed that the Police Union will also be involved with these discussions. Hill
166 pointed out the issues involved with Regional Governance like different collective
167 bargaining agreements. Hill reported that Hinesburg had completed a Strategic Plan for
168 Emergency Services and the report would be finished in September.
169
170 Hill reviewed the plan to extend the existing contract with Hinesburg to include patrol
171 services and responses in addition to Chief, administrative, and supervision services.
172 Forward expressed his interest in this contract being more explicit than the current one.
173 Furr stated that the contract should specify Arneson’s ability to prioritize the use of
174 officers. Furr also stated the contract should spell out community policing principles and
175 fair, impartial policing policies. Miller confirmed that this is what our community wants.
176 Cambridge stated that a lot of these things are inherent to what they are as police officers.
177 Hill stated that the Chief is significant in establishing a culture, especially in a small
178 department. Forward observed that the Hinesburg police officers really get out of their
179 cars and seem to really like meeting people. Furr reviewed that they still need the
180 Richmond Town Attorney to meet with the Hinesburg Town Attorney and Police Union.
181
182 Van Eeghen presented a statement from Richmond Racial Equity. Richmond Racial
183 Equity expects that any police working with Richmond be required to engage/report on
184 education and training on racial profiling, collect/report crime and traffic data, use
185 alternative justice venues like the Community Justice Center and to follow Richmond's
186 polygraph policy. The leadership of the Richmond Police Department is requested to
187 meet with community members in regular forums, in person and through electronic
188 media, to review police activities, aggregate data/trends and future plans. Van Eeghen
189 stated this was proposed a year ago and making this explicit in an agreement means that it
190 becomes defined and objective enough to work on and hold us accountable.

191
192 **Consideration of selling one or more police cruisers**
193 Timestamp: 1:06
194 PoliceCruiserInventory06-29-2023.pdf
195 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/07/3d_PoliceCruiserInventory06-29-2023.pdf
196

197
198 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Sander, Hill, Cambridge, Wardwell,
199 Arneson, Miller, Forward
200

201 Furr reviewed Police Cruiser Inventory. Sander stated that police cruisers are harder to
202 obtain than dispose of but that they are depreciating in the parking lot. Sander suggested
203 selling the two 2017 cruisers. Cambridge agreed that selling those cruisers made sense.
204 Hill confirmed it would be Cruisers #1 and #3 but might include #5 as well. Cambridge
205 stated that we should keep the Tesla due to the amount of money invested for police
206 equipment. Miller suggested putting two cruisers into preserved storage. Forward stated
207 that this is an administrative task and suggested that Cambridge provide a
208 recommendation.

209
210 *Hill moved to get rid of Cruiser #1 and Cruiser #3, the 2017 Ford Explorers, though a*
211 *sale of just the vehicle or the vehicle with equipment with the goal of achieving optimum*
212 *financial return and to stipulate a minimum bid built in for sale or auction. Sander*
213 *seconded.*

214 *Roll call vote follows discussion.*

215
216 Arneson stated that we would come back to this topic with some options. Miller asked if
217 there is a secondary market for the equipment. Arneson stated it is often custom to
218 specific makes and models. Sander suggested that Rutland might be in a position of need
219 for police cruisers. Forward suggested a full inventory of our equipment.

220
221 *Roll Call Vote: Furr, Hill, Miller, Sander in favor. Forward not in favor. Motion*
222 *approved.*

223
224 Sander described the process of preserving some of the vehicles but it is difficult to find
225 an indoor place to store it. Hill suggested we follow-up on some of the details, costs, and
226 options.

227
228 **Consideration of waiving permit fees for construction related to the recent flooding**
229 **on buildings located in the floodplain**

230 Timestamp: 1:25

231 Permit Fee Waiver Resolution.pdf

232 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2023/07/3e_Permit_Fee_Waiver_Resolution.pdf

233

234
235 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Hill, Sander

236

237 Furr stated that Planning and Zoning Director Keith Osborne requested the Selectboard
238 consider waiving all permit fees associated with any flood damage. Furr reviewed that
239 you cannot waive the need for a permit, but the Town does have control of the fee
240 structure. Hill asked if FEMA would reimbursement for permit fees. Sander suggested
241 we waive the fees first and then ask for reimbursement later.

242

243 *Sander moved that per the power granted to the Selectboard in the Development Permit*
244 *Fees schedule, Footnote 7, I move that the Town of Richmond Selectboard approve the*
245 *request from the Department of Planning and Zoning to waive any Development*
246 *Permitting Fees associated with the recent flooding event of July 10-17, 2023. The*
247 *requirement for permits in the Special Flood Hazard Overlay District and all other*
248 *districts shall still apply, only the fees are waived.*

249

250 *Hill amended the motion to include “This waiver notwithstanding, if the permit fees are*
251 *eligible for FEMA reimbursement they will be charged to FEMA.”*

252 *Forward seconded.*

253

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

255

256 **Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**

257 *Timestamp: 1:28*

258

259 **Minutes:**

260

261 *Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 7/5/23. Miller seconded.*

262 *Roll call vote follows discussion.*

263

264 *Forward stated that he liked the new format of the minutes although it is still 8 pages*
265 *long. Forward would prefer the time to be used for tasks like selling police cars. Furr*
266 *confirmed that the video recordings are not legal documents but that they can be*
267 *referenced as supporting documents. Furr stated that this is a good compromise as we are*
268 *still going above and beyond. Miller suggested adding line numbers.*

269

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

271

272 **Purchase Orders:**

273

274 *Sander moved to approve PO# 4650 to Water & Sewer Department for FY23 January –*
275 *June Fire Protection not to exceed \$25,574.00. Hill seconded.*

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

277

278 *Miller moved to amend PO# 4439 to O’Casey Trucking for 94 hours of Tri-Axle Trucking*
279 *to assist hauling gravel to Snipe Ireland Road not to exceed \$10,053.75. Sander*
280 *seconded.*

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

282

283 *Forward stated we will probably see a lot of these in the future due to the recent flood and*
284 *upcoming road repairs. Hill reviewed that these often get reimbursed in a future fiscal*
285 *year which is why Finance Director Connie Bona suggests having extra cash on hand in*
286 *the budget. FEMA might take two years to pay the Town back. Arneson stated that he*
287 *thinks the cash flow is good right now.*

288

289 *Forward moved to approve PO# 4401 to Hinesburg Sand and Gravel for 3720 tons of*
290 *Washed Winter Sand for Dirt Road Maintenance not to exceed \$48,169.02. Hill*
291 *seconded.*

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

293

294 **Warrants:**

295

296 *Sander moved to approve the general warrants as amended on 7/17/2023. Miller*
297 *seconded.*

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

299

300 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

301 *Update on Cruisers

302 *Update on Storms

303 *Police Contract

304

305 **Adjourn**

306

307 *Sander moved to adjourn. Miller seconded.*

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

309

310 **Meeting adjourned at: 8:45 pm**

311

312 **Chat file from Zoom:**

313 00:28:25 Linda Parent: neighbor helping neighbor from Huntington will be
314 accepting monetary donations to assist flood victims....

315 00:37:16 D Noble: GREAT idea!!

316 01:02:46 Patty Brushett:Richmond Racial Equity expects that any police
317 working/contracting with Richmond be required to engage and report on education and
318 training on racial profiling, collect and report crime/traffic data, use alternative justice
319 venues, and have a thorough understanding of and agreement to follow Richmond's No
320 Mas Polimigra Policy. The leadership of the Richmond Police Department, if
321 working/contracting with Richmond, is required to meet with community members in
322 regular forums (e.g. quarterly), in person and through electronic media, to review police
323 activities, aggregate data and treatment and future plans.L

324 .

325 01:09:46 D Noble: Thanks y'all! So excited about moving forward with
326 collaboration and community connectedness!

327 01:17:41 Duncan Wardwell: The Cruiser with damage is a 2017 not 2019.

328 01:23:39 Linda Parent: Dianne is working on a special project that includes
329 shredding selected police records.

330 01:34:03 D Noble: Thank you all so much for all that you do for so many. .

331 Feeling so grateful for our amazing Richmond community. Certainly bringing rays of
332 light to many in a time that has been challenging. Have a great night!

333