

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Special Meeting of the Town of Richmond Selectboard**
3 **Minutes of July 29, 2024**
4

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

7 **Absent:** Adam Wood
8

9 **Staff Present:** Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town
10 Manager; Connie Bona, Finance Director; Tyler Machia, Zoning Administrator; Peter
11 Gosselin, Highway Foreman; Gerald Levesque, Assistant Fire Chief; Jim Feinson, Town
12 Treasurer
13

14 **Others Present:** Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, 18023102933, Andrew Bessette,
15 Cara LaBounty, Carina, Carina Mclauley, Cath Burns, Ed Mclauley, Ernie Buford,
16 Graham Wolfson, Jackie Daub, Jason Sanders, Jon Kart, Julie Waite, Julie Welkowitz,
17 Kara, Karen Greene, Mary Andes, Mary Houle, Michael, Michael Connolly, Molly
18 Segelin, Nicole Davis, Reisman, Shay DiCocco, Susannah Zereloff
19

20 **MMCTV Video:** https://youtu.be/iXuTA5Pxxjk?si=SdoD_Wnbt1n1ZEJ
21

22 **Call to Order:** 7:01 pm
23

24 **Welcome by:** Sander
25

26 **Public Comment:**
27

28 Furr stated that MMCTV was ecstatic with people coming up to the table to speak
29 because everybody was so clear to hear.
30

31 **Additions or Deletions to Agenda:** None
32

33 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**
34

35 **Update on flood recovery process**
36

36 **Timestamp:** 0:01
37

38 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Arneson, Hill, LaBounty, Miller, Furr,
39 Machia, Gosselin, Houle, Segelin, Welkowitz
40

41 Arneson reviewed the flood recovery process for Water Sewer and Fire Departments.
42 Arneson summarized that FEMA has not yet declared this a disaster declaration, but they
43 hope to get a declaration rather soon as it officially unlocks FEMA funding for
44 municipalities and individual assistance. Arneson stated that they are looking to set up a
45 long-term recovery group for the amount of local residents which are impacted by the
46 flood to help connect them to resources at the state and national level.
47

48 Hill reviewed the re-occurring flood issues and costs associated with the pump station
49 and the Volunteers Green infrastructure. Sander and Hill confirmed the Water/Sewere

50 Commission will discuss the repair and placement of the damaged sewer pipe under the
51 Bridge St bridge. LaBounty stated that the Selectboard should guide the Planning
52 Commission to allow a footprint of the playground to be moved up in Volunteers Green
53 Bandshell's higher ground. Machia reviewed that the playground could be reconfigured
54 provided it fits in that playground box and moved to a different location, but it is still
55 very much a work in progress.

56
57 Gosselin provided a Highway Department update on their work with 5 big contractors on
58 the worst affected roads. Gosselin stated that this damage is quite extensive this time
59 around with over eight inches of rain in eight hours. Houle stated that the State can
60 elevate a road up to 3-feet in elevation in one year without culverts or making it safe.
61 Houle stated that the gravel bar by the Jonesville Bridge is about 3-feet higher and the
62 Town already owns it so they should dredge the river.

63
64 Hill suggested a follow up with the Agency of Transportation about drainage on Rt 2 by
65 Lily Pond Cir. Segelin stated that the beaver dam broke up on top of Richmond Pond, so
66 it was a tidal wave that came down and blew the back of my garage wall off the
67 foundation. Gosselin reviewed that his house is in a similar condition as it was a
68 catastrophic event. Gosselin reviewed that upsizing a culvert requires a deeper and wider
69 ditch with the stone over State standards at 24-inches on the hotspot areas that just keep
70 blowing out. Gosselin stated that is what FEMA wants them to upsize culverts and put
71 better armor in the ditches to make it more flood resilient. Hill reviewed that at Jones
72 Mill Rd there is a combination of Town right-of-way, State right-of-way, and Railroad
73 right-of-way. LaBounty stated that the Town can get approval to have it dug back out
74 and put back where it belongs

75
76 **Review of cash flow for FY25 including an allocation for flood related expenses**
77 Timestamp: 0:37
78 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3b_General](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3b_General_Checking_Reserves_07-25-24__1_.xlsx)
79 [Checking_Reserves_07-25-24__1_.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3b_General_Checking_Reserves_07-25-24__1_.xlsx)

80 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Bona, Arneson, Furr, LaBounty, Hill,
81 Feinson

82
83 Arneson shared the spreadsheet from the packet that shows we are going to spend a
84 decent amount of money on contractors and recovery for at least \$2 million by
85 September. Arneson summarized the estimates of projected revenue and expenses.
86 Arneson summarized that the Selectboard could borrow from Reserves with legal
87 documents to pay back the reserves. Arneson stated that if they didn't want to take a
88 loan, they could get a line of credit. Arneson reviewed that they could delay transferring
89 the ARPA money. Bona summarized that the auditors would like to know what reserves
90 they would borrow. Bona stated that a resolution could be made that when FEMA money
91 comes in, it goes into those reserves. Bona stated that a line of credit isn't going to cover
92 if another weather event comes through. Hill stated that VLCT or Vermont Emergency
93 Management might assist a bunch of towns that are going to have to get cash in a hurry to
94 get contractors to fix roads. Feinson confirmed that they are fortunate in the short term
95 that they can borrow from the reserves, but it will take a little time to understand all those
96 resources.

97
98
99

100 **Consideration of waiving permit fees for construction to repair damage caused by**
101 **the recent flooding**

102 Timestamp: 0:49

103

104 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Furr, Hill, Machia

105

106 *Furr moved that Per the power granted to the Selectboard in the Development Permit*
107 *Fees schedule, Footnote 7, the Town of Richmond Selectboard waive any Development*
108 *Permitting Fees associated with the recent flooding event of July 10-11, 2024. The*
109 *requirement for permits shall still apply, only the fees are waived. Hill seconded.*
110 *Roll Call Vote follows discussion.*

111

112 Machia confirmed that no specific end date on this provides him the flexibility to work
113 with a long-term process.

114

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

116

117 **Consideration of submitting a request for assistance to the Emergency Watershed**
118 **Protection Program to review river and stream locations in Richmond which may**
119 **be eligible for funding for flood mitigation projects**

120 Timestamp: 0:54

121 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3d1_EWP_Key_Program_Points_2024.pdf

122

124 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3d2_EWP_Process_Steps.pdf

125

127 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3d3_EWPP_National_Sponsor_s_Guide_-_October_2021.pdf

128

130 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3d4_EWP_Assistance_Request_Letter_-_Richmond.pdf

131

132
133 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Arneson, Hill, Waite, Burns, Carina,
134 Welkowitz, Machia, LaBounty

135

136 Arneson reviewed that they currently have Governor Peck and Dugway Rd in the
137 program. Arneson stated that it must be a threat to a house or a septic tank so it would be
138 prudent to request a review for assistance for the Town of Richmond again. Arneson
139 stated that it also might help with some sediment removal. Arneson stated that the Town
140 doesn't take financial responsibility for the matching funds so there's a lot of stakeholders
141 to figure that out.

142

143 *Miller moved to submit a request for assistance to the Emergency Watershed Protection*
144 *Program. Hill seconded.*

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

146

147 Arneson confirmed that the Town is the sponsor and the next step is to identify locations
148 in Richmond that need to be examined by the program and he will post information
149 (<https://www.richmondvt.gov/news/post/notify-the-town-of-potential-projects-for-the->

150 ewp-program). Machia stated that there is a local permitting component as well with
151 projects dealing in that riverbed is more than likely going to require Conditional Use
152 approval by the Development Review Board. Machia stated that if someone needs to
153 berm something up to keep the water from running in a house then do that and then we'll
154 figure it out the back end. Machia suggested they might have a special DRB meeting
155 focused on these types of projects.

156

157 **Follow up on flood related issues in the Lilly Pond Rd. and Red Barn Ln.**
158 **neighborhood**

159 Timestamp: 1:07

160 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3e_Lily_Pon](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3e_Lily_Pond_Cir_Red_Barn_Oneil_-_Richmond_Select_Board_7.15.24.pdf)
161 [d_Cir_Red_Barn_Oneil_-_Richmond_Select_Board_7.15.24.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3e_Lily_Pond_Cir_Red_Barn_Oneil_-_Richmond_Select_Board_7.15.24.pdf)

162

163 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Furr, DiCocco, Welkowitz, Miller,
164 LaBounty, Hill, Gosselin, Arneson, Levesque, Sanders, Davis, Levesque, Buford, Carina,
165 Machia, Waite

166

167 Furr suggested that people who live there provide updates.

168

169 DiCocco reviewed Lily Pond Cir, Oneill Dr, and Red Barn Ln damage and on-going
170 repairs due to the stream changing dramatically through the storm. DiCocco summarized
171 the previous requests.

172

173 Welkowitz stated that the gas company cannot come out because they feel the property is
174 not stable enough. Miller asked about bringing in mobile homes for temporary housing.
175 LaBounty suggested searching for local rental homes or in-law apartments that aren't
176 being used.

177

178 Hill summarized that adoption of the road by the Town is governed by statute and must
179 be built to Town specs and in good condition. Gosselin reviewed that they have had this
180 request for 30 years, but they don't know what's in the road and it is astronomical
181 financially. Hill summarized that there are taxpayers in the Town who are very
182 motivated to not have the Town take over the road that is a financial liability. LaBounty
183 outlined options and her experiences. Gosselin suggested that their road association
184 might be able to take out a loan. Sander summarized that reading the deeds and
185 easements with the power companies might provide other financial resources. Arneson
186 stated that he understands that EWP does cover things like sediment removal.

187

188 Levesque confirmed that a Swiftwater team was responding to Red Barn Ln when he
189 received a phone call at the Fire Station that the people were safe on the second floor, so
190 the Swiftwater was diverted to Hillview Rd. Buford stated that a Swiftwater rescue team
191 showed up at Lily Pond Cir that night as they escorted his and his children out.

192

193 Segelin expressed concerns about what is going on at Richmond Pond with beaver dams
194 and the Vermont Land Trust maintaining it. Segelin stated nothing will change
195 downstream if nothing changes upstream.

196

197 DiCocco stated that on the morning of the 11th people in the water downstream were
198 trying to help their neighbors and felt the water level rise significantly while work was
199 happening upstream. DiCocco requested that in future events there is an inspection done

200 downstream before work happens upstream to assure that there's nobody in the water and
201 there's no one at risk. Gosselin reviewed that the water was never dammed up by a
202 contractor as it bypassed the culvert and blew it out. Furr suggested creating a binder of
203 checklists for flood response. Furr reviewed the Vermont Alert System communication
204 system (<https://vem.vermont.gov/vtalert>).

205
206 DiCocco expressed concerns about how the water used to flow over Rt 2 until it was built
207 higher, the summer of 2023. Furr stated that they are talking to the Agency of
208 Transportation and State Legislators.

209
210 Gosselin summarized how culverts get plugged with debris and sometimes they remove
211 the blockage, and the culverts are actually wide open. Gosselin confirmed that they do
212 upsize culverts if they cannot take the water.

213
214 Machia stated that they will look at scheduling emergency meetings and not get
215 everybody queued up. Gosselin stated that this is temporary emergency work to protect
216 property and not a final site plan. Machia stated that he has zero issues with directing
217 water away from the house but removing gravel bars is not going to be done quickly.
218 Arneson reviewed that they can write something into a letter about that, so the contractor
219 are ready to do.

220
221 **Discussion of sediment in streams and brooks on private property**

222 Timestamp: 2:58

223
224 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Arneson, Hill

225
226 Arneson reviewed that they have been talking about this topic all night and that the EWP
227 is one way. Arneson stated the VLCT says that the State should be responsible for
228 waterways, but the State claims no responsibility. Arneson stated the the CCRPC might
229 help with some long-term programs. Arneson reviewed that they do not have the funding
230 to do anything outside of the Town right of way. Arneson stated that if it's on your
231 property, it's your responsibility unfortunately.

232
233 **Discussion of financial aid options and assistance for private property owners**

234 Timestamp: 3:02

235 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g1_Resource](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g1_Resource_Funding_Opportunities_Private_Roads_24-07-20.pdf)
236 [e-Funding_Opportunities_Private_Roads_24-07-20.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g1_Resource_Funding_Opportunities_Private_Roads_24-07-20.pdf)

237
238 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g2_Assistan](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g2_Assistance_for_Property_Owners.pdf)
239 [ce_for_Property_Owners.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2024/07/3g2_Assistance_for_Property_Owners.pdf)

240
241 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Arneson

242
243 Arneson summarized the financial aid options that VLCT shared from the packet.

244
245 **Adjourn**

246
247 *Miller moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

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

249

250 **Meeting adjourned at: 10:12 PM**

251

252 **Chat file from Zoom:**

253 00:33:08 J: Sorry, got here late, what item are we on?

254 00:33:25 Josh Arneson: Item A.

255 00:33:36 J: ty

256 00:56:59 jon: It took me three years following the Irene flood to arrange to
257 elevate my house. Do you want to extended the waiver that long or longer

258 01:32:04 connie Bona: People need to come up front

259 01:47:11 connie Bona: People need to come to the front and face the mic

260 02:11:04 MMCTV Erin: Town of underhill has beaver deceivers

261 02:19:22 Jackie Daub: it was about 230 in the afternoon

262 02:21:14 Jackie Daub: The town knew about the log jam at noon time before they
263 sent someone up to fix snipe Ireland road