

**Town of Richmond
Selectboard Meeting
Minutes of July 21, 2025**

Members Present: Bard Hill, Jay Furr, David Sander, Caitlin Filkins, Adam Wood

Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Deputy Town Manager; Gerald Levesque, Fire Chief

Others Present: MMCTV Erin Wagg, Amy Wardwell, Angela Cote, Bonny Steuer, Brendan, Brendan Filkins, Cara LaBounty, Charlotte Phillips, Chelsye Brooks, Connie van Eeghen, Denise Barnard, Jeanne Adams, Jeanne Agner, Judy Rosovsky, Linda Parent, Martha Waterman, Mary Houle, Melissa Wolaver, Michael Storrs, Patty Brushett, Tess Storrs, Trevor Brooks, Trish

MMCTV Video: Recorded by MMCTV by Erin Wagg
<https://www.youtube.com/live/O5xQkkEId9I?si=-gO2bdeDovkbfrbZ>

Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Welcome by: Furr

Public Comment: Houle reported numerous bear sightings in the daylight.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to Agenda:

Furr stated that Item (d), the request to use Conservation Reserve funds to purchase trees, garden hoses and benches to be installed near the pickleball courts of Browns Court was not going to be considered tonight as the agenda on the Conservation meeting was not properly warned.

LaBounty requested moving Item (l), the Tesla update, in front of Item (j), Fire Chief. Furr approved

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Update on special meeting being held on Tuesday, July 22, 2025 to review and approve the engineering plan for the Southview 3 Acre Permit

Timestamp: 0:10

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3a_Special_Selectboard_Meeting_Agenda_for_7-22-25.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson

Furr summarized that the meeting will begin at the Cul-de-sac and Westall Dr at 6 PM and then proceed to the Library after that (around 7 PM).

Review of a request to display a sign at the Town Center which states “Abortion stops a beating heart”

Timestamp: 0:13

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3b_Request_to_display_Abortion_Stops_A_Beating_Heart_sign.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Houle, LaBounty, Barnard, Hill, Steuer, Cote, Brushett, Filkins

Furr reviewed that under Vermont State law, the Selectboard has the right to have its own speech, which is not the speech of the Town or any individual member.

Houle pointed out that she sent a Certified Letter (see Related Files link above). Houle stated that if the reasoning for the current sign on the Town property is because of one life lost, then do not now ignore the millions of lives also taken due to abortions. Houle reviewed that Milton has a policy with a rotating time frame.

LaBounty suggested putting on the current sign that it’s the speech of the Selectboard.

Barnard stated this Town needs a policy on signs. Hill stated that the Welcome to Richmond sign is the proper way to welcome people to Town. Furr showed the sign from Glover, VT.

Steuer stated that the Black Lives Matter sign is a reflection of policy that has actually been put in place by the Town, a declaration of equity and inclusion. Cote suggested the bottom of the sign could display that it was approved by the Selectboard and putting the signs at the entrances to Town and not just the Village. Hill observed that this should be a properly warned agenda item.

Filkins does not support putting up “an abortion stops a beating heart” sign because a lot of women in this community go through really difficult times trying to get pregnant and having to go through miscarriages which result in abortion procedures.

Furr stated that a future agenda item will consider a general sign policy.

Consideration of applying for a USA Pickleball "Grow the Game Grant" for pickleball equipment

Timestamp: 0:34

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Agner

Furr reviewed that this grant will pay for 24 wooden paddles, 100 pickleballs and one portable net. The Richmond Free Library has agreed to lend out the materials if they are awarded. Agner stated that it is the smallest bundle from the USA Pickleball Corporation.

Wood moved to apply for the USA Pickleball Grow the Game Grant and to appoint Town Manager Josh Arneson as the grant manager. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Consideration of a request to use Conservation Reserve funds to purchase trees, garden hoses, and benches to be installed near the pickleball courts at Browns Court

Timestamp: 0:37

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3d1_2025_The_3_Parks_CommitteeGrant_application_for_CC_Funds.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr

This topic will be on a future Selectboard agenda after the Conservation Committee properly warns the request at an upcoming meeting.

Consideration of a request to use Conservation Reserve funds to partially fund a land acquisition by the Richmond Land Trust

Timestamp: 0:37

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3e1_2025_Floodplain_Parcel_Acquisition_garriscr_Borie.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3e2_email_on_RCC_Approval.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Rosovsky, Hill, LaBounty, Houle, Wood, Cote, Sander

Rosovsky reviewed the request for the use of \$7,500.00 from the Conservation Reserve fund to partially fund the Richmond Land Trust's acquisition of 11.2 acres of land on the north side of the Winooski River just east of the Richmond Village. This contains a majestic Silver Maple-Ostrich Fern forest and a critical wildlife corridor.

LaBounty does not support this use of the Conservation Fund as the land is either in the floodway or flood plain, so this is never going to be allowed to be developed. LaBounty stated that the Town Center building does qualify for using Conservation Funds.

Rosovsky confirmed that the Land Trust is planning to put trails in and make it publicly accessible as a recreation and education site.

Wood observed that this whole parcel is squarely in the floodway so nothing can be built that requires excavation.

Hill suggested that the Land Trust be invited back to state their case on the benefit to the taxpayer. Cote stated that the Land Trust can find another funding mechanism.

Furr confirmed that no Selectboard member wanted to move this purchase at this time.
Sander would like to invite the Land Trust to speak to this at a future meeting.

Consideration of request to close Baker St. on September 6, 2025 for a block party

Timestamp: 0:56

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3f_Block_Party_Request.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Wolaver, Hill, Sander

*Hill moved to close Baker St. from 3:30 – 8:00pm on Saturday, September 6, 2025 for a block party with a rain date of Saturday, September 13, 2025. Sander seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*

Consideration of approving a vendor to replace the parking lot side entry doors at the Town Center

Timestamp: 0:58

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3g1_ACME_Glass.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3g2_PORTLANDGlass.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Sander, Arneson, Wood, Hill, LaBounty, Barnard, Wagg, Filkins

Furr reviewed the proposals for new glass doors and the eventual keyless access control system previously approved. The Owners Rep, Jay Labare, recommended Portland Glass. Wood stated that based on his experiences with both companies, he would use ACME glass. Arneson stated that they would follow up to ensure the bids were still valid.

Filkins move to approve ACME Glass as the vendor to install new entry doors on the parking lot side of the Town Center at a cost not to exceed \$30,970.00 with funds to come from the Town Center Reserve Fund. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Update on Requests for Proposals for Town Center Property Management Services and Town Center Organizational Project Manager

Timestamp: 1:10

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3h1_General_Property_Management_RFP_DRAFT.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3h2_Richmond_RFP_DRAFT_2_.pdf

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson, LaBounty, Storrs

Arneson reviewed that the Town Center Committee want to go with an RFP for property management services for non-capital routine maintenance and an RFP for an organizational project manager. Arneson estimated proposals in early September.

LaBounty requested that the RFPs go through the Town Center Committee first for a recommendation to the Selectboard.

Consideration of filling the vacant seat on the Town Center Committee which has been reserved for a Selectboard member

Timestamp: 1:17

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Wood, Hill, LaBounty, Storrs, Wood, Sander, Filkins

Wood confirmed that he has resigned from the Town Center Committee.

Wood moved to appoint David Sander to the Town Center Committee. Hill seconded. Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Furr, Wood in favor. Sander abstains. Motion approved.

Sander moved to appoint Bard Hill to the Town Center Committee. Filkins seconded. Roll Call Vote: Filkins, Furr, Sander, Wood in favor. Hill abstains. Motion approved.

Update on sales process for the Tesla

Timestamp: 1:32

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson, Filkins

Arneson confirmed that the Town has been in touch with Carvana with documentation. Filkins stated that Carvana might not take cars that had been modified.

Consideration of appointing a Fire Chief, possible executive session

Timestamp: 1:34

People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson, Wood, Sander, Hill, Levesque

Arneson stated that he, Jay and Adam interviewed Jerry (Gerald Levesque) last week. They found him well qualified for the job with ideas for the future of the Fire Department. They recommend moving forward with Jerry. Wood confirmed that Jerry has several months and years with Fire Chief experience. Sander confirmed Jerry's ability to respond in a civil but authoritative manner.

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 247 *Wood moved to appoint Jerry Levesque to the position of Richmond Fire Chief for a term*
 248 *of three years. Sander seconded.*
 249 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
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 252 **Discussion of process to appoint Assistant Fire Chief**
 253 Timestamp: 1:40
 254
 255 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Arneson, Levesque, Wood, Filkins, Sander
 256
 257 Arneson reviewed that all interested firefighters should respond with a cover letter,
 258 resume, and list of qualifications so they can interview all the candidates and ask for
 259 feedback from the firefighters.
 260
 261 *Sander moved to designate Adam Wood and Caitlin Filkins to be the two members of the*
 262 *Selectboard involved in the Assistant Fire Chief search. Wood seconded.*
 263 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Sander, Furr in favor. Filkins & Wood abstain. Motion approved.*
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 267 **Consideration of accepting a Class 2 Highway Paving Grant**
 268 Timestamp: 1:46
 269
 270 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3m_Richmon](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3m_RichmondTownTHRP02277.PDF)
 271 [dTownTHRP02277.PDF](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3m_RichmondTownTHRP02277.PDF)
 272
 273 *Filkins moved to accept the Class 2 Highway Paving Grant. Sander seconded.*
 274 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
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 277 **Consideration of accepting a loan for the Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd.**
 278 **Waterline Replacement Project**
 279 Timestamp: 1:47
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 281 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3n_RF3-487-](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3n_RF3-487-3.0_Richmond_Loan_Agreement_Signed_by_VBB.pdf)
 282 [3.0_Richmond_Loan_Agreement_Signed_by_VBB.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/07/3n_RF3-487-3.0_Richmond_Loan_Agreement_Signed_by_VBB.pdf)
 283
 284 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Filkins, Arneson, Hill, Sander
 285
 286 *Sander moved to accept the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan for the Tilden*
 287 *Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. Waterline Replacement Project which provides 50%*
 288 *forgiveness on up to \$1.9M in funds borrowed. Filkins seconded.*
 289 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
 290
 291 **Approval of Minutes, Purchase Orders, and Warrants**
 292 Timestamp: 1:50
 293

Minutes:

Sander moved to approve the draft Selectboard Minutes of 7/7/25 as presented. Filkins seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Purchase Orders:

Wood moved to approve purchase order number 5202 to Richmond Rescue for the FY26 allocation in the amount of \$60,088.00. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Sander moved to approve purchase order number 5206 to the Richmond Land Trust for the parking lot at Beeken Preserve in the amount of \$30,170.00. Filkins seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Hill moved to approve purchase order number 5207 to Vermont Recreational Surfacing and Fencing for the installation of the pickleball courts in the amount of \$144,911.00. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Warrants:

Filkins moved to approve the warrants from the July 7, 2025 meeting. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Sander moved to approve the warrants from the July 21, 2025 meeting. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Next Meeting Agenda

-Ordinances for signs

-Land Trust & Conservation Committee request

Executive Sessions

a) Discussion of an employee evaluation

b) Evaluation of an employee

Sander moved to find that premature public knowledge about the evaluation of an employee would cause the Town or person to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

Sander moved that we enter into executive session to discuss the evaluation of an employee under the provisions of 1 VSA 313(a)(3) of the Vermont Statutes. Hill seconded
Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.

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 345 *Wood moved to exit executive session. Sander seconded.*
 346 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
 347
 348 *Filkins moved to find that premature public knowledge about the evaluation of an*
 349 *employee would cause the Town or person to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Sander*
 350 *seconded.*
 351 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
 352
 353 *Filkins move that we enter into executive session to discuss the evaluation of an employee*
 354 *under the provisions of 1 VSA 313(a)(3) of the Vermont Statutes. Sander seconded.*
 355 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
 356
 357 *Sander moved to exit executive session. Hill seconded.*
 358 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Filkins, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
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 361 **Adjourn**
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 363 *Sander moved to adjourn. Filkins seconded.*
 364 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Filkins, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*
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 366 **Meeting adjourned at: 9:54 p.m.**
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 369 **Chat file from Zoom:**
 370 00:37:10 Jeanne Adams: I think adding the new sign will cause even more
 371 signs to go up. Do we want town center to be covered with signs of opposing views? I
 372 don't. I would reject this request.
 373 00:39:24 Martha Waterman : Abortion is a safe, routine, life saving medical
 374 procedure.
 375 00:40:52 Patty Brushett: Thanks Jeanne and Martha
 376 00:41:04 Jeanne Adams: Reacted to "Thanks Jeanne and Ma..." with 👍
 377 01:14:39 Trevor Brooks: If Acme is local I would support that over a national
 378 company.