

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Special Budget Informational Selectboard Meeting**
3 **Minutes of February 23, 2026**
4

5 **Members Present:** Caitlin Filkins, Bard Hill, Greg Rabideau, David Sander
6

7 **Absent:** Adam Wood
8

9 **Staff Present:** Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Deputy Town
10 Manager; Susanne Parent, Town Clerk; Connie Bona, Finance Director
11

12 **Others Present:** Recorded by MMCTV Erin Wagg, Catherine Bianca L. Wakim, Clint
13 Buxton, Connie van Eeghen, John Rankin, Jonathan Chapple-Sokel, JP, Judy Rosovsky,
14 June Heston, Karen Prosciak, Lo Wolf - Age Well, Marcy Harding, Martha Nye, Morgan
15 Wolaver, Sam Pratt, Trevor Brooks, Virginia Clarke
16

17 **MMCTV Video:** <https://youtu.be/cySIBZob8ac?si=bKnukMRcjBgRHdv8>
18

19 **Call to Order:** 7:00 PM
20

21 **Welcome by:** Filkins
22

23 **Public Comment:** Rabideau acknowledged Ryan Cochran Siegel, Julia Kern and Ben
24 Ogden for representing Richmond in this year's Olympics. There were also a number of
25 outstanding athletes from Jericho, so the local school district punches above its weight.
26 Sander observed the Cochran Siegel won his latest silver medal 54 years to the day after
27 his mother, Barbara Ann Cochran, won gold in downhill skiing.
28

29 **Additions, Deletions or Modifications to Agenda:** None
30

31 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**
32

33 **Australian Ballot Information Hearing**

34 Timestamp: 0:02

35 2 TOWN REPORT 2026 WARNING FINAL
36

37 Arneson reviewed that this is the second of two public informational hearings for
38 Australian ballot items prior to Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 3. He will go over the
39 budget, discuss the Town Plan, the Conservation Reserve Fund, the Town Center Reserve
40 Fund, and Charitable Appropriations. These are all Australian Ballot items for Town
41 Meeting. There are no chances to amend the budget as the Warning is already printed
42 and ready for Town Meeting. Arneson illustrated that information on Town Meeting and
43 the budget can be found at:

44 <https://www.richmondvt.gov/news/post/annual-town-meeting-march-3-2026>
45
46

47 **Review and discuss Article 6: Shall the voters of the Town of Richmond approve a**
48 **budget of \$5,955,969.00 to meet the expenses and liabilities of the Town of**
49 **Richmond in Fiscal Year 2027?**

50 Timestamp: 0:02

51 2a1 FY27 FINAL Budget for Town Report

52 2a2 FY27 FINAL Budget for Town Report

53 2a3 Budget Notes

54 2a4 Reserve Funds

55 2a5 Town Center Fund

56 2a6 FY27 Capital Plan 3A 12-15-25

57 2a7 FY2027 Budget Presentation - 2-3-26

58

59 Arneson presented the slideshow for the two Informational Meetings and Town Meeting
60 Day:

61 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2026/02/2a7_FY2027_Budget_Presentation_-_2-3-26.pdf

62

63
64 Arneson confirmed that the current number of cruisers and officers are currently the
65 same. If the Police Department hired another officer, then they would have to buy
66 another cruiser for that officer.

67

68 Arneson confirmed that the Unassigned and Restricted funds took a big hit with the
69 flooding, but he is confident FEMA is close to reimbursing the Town for some of those
70 funds. Arneson stated that he hasn't heard any concerns about "clawback" of those
71 funds.

72

73

74 **Review and discuss Article 7: Shall the voters of the Town of Richmond, as required**
75 **under 24 VSA § 4385, adopt the 2026 Richmond Town Plan?**

76 Timestamp: 0:48

77 2b 4.0 - TOWN PLAN 2026 FOURTH DRAFT EDITS CLEAN 1.21.26 - SB Changes

78

79 Clarke, the Chair of the Planning Commission, illustrated that every 8 years, the Town
80 has to publish a Municipal Town Plan. This vote to approve the Town Plan will not
81 increase taxes directly. Clarke presented the documents associated with the 11 different
82 sections of Town Plan

83 -Community Development

84 -Economic Development

85 -Education

86 -Emergency Resilience

87 -Energy and Climate Change

88 -Future Land Use

89 -Historic Resources

90 -Housing

- 91 -Natural Resources
- 92 -Transportation
- 93 -Utilities & Facilities

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95
96
97
98
99

Clarke stated that the State made it clear that Richmond is a shared community in Chittenden County and Vermont. The Town Plan was a good process with a good map resulting.

Review and discuss Article 8: Shall the voters of the Town of Richmond approve funding the Conservation Reserve Fund by adding one cent to the municipal tax rate in Fiscal Year 2027?

Timestamp: 1:15
2c1 CRF Info Sheet 02-06-26
2c2 CRF Renewal 02-06-26

106

Pratt and Rosovsky presented the CRF Renewal presentation and the CRF Info Sheet from the packet. The Conservation Reserve Fund is financed by 1 cent on the tax rate so that it costs a taxpayer \$10 for every \$100,000 of assessed value or \$50 for every \$500,000 of assessed value.

111

Pratt summarized that the 30% by 2030 State goal depends on the Town as Burlington is not going to conserve 30% and Bolton is going to conserve more than 30% because it is so mountainous. Rosovsky estimated that there is about 21% of conserved land in Richmon so they are in good shape. Hill observed it might be how we define conserved land like a flood plain is conserved. Pratt illustrated the Conservation Commission opportunity to reach out to folks that have land on the Winooski River or in a flood plain. Rabideau asked about recreation being integrated into conserved lands. Pratt illustrated how the revised version of the management of the Andrews Community Forest is an example of recreation in a conserved parcel. Pratt described the flood mitigation measures as bank stabilization, especially along Volunteers Green and water quality studies.

123

Harding suggested expanding the Conservation Reserve Fund to leverage other money to make affordable housing projects happen in Richmond. Rosovsky and Pratt illustrated how funds help with agricultural, historical and natural resources which encompasses the Town Center.

128

129

Review and discuss Article 9: Shall the voters of the Town of Richmond approve funding the Town Center Reserve Fund by adding one cent to the municipal tax rate in Fiscal Year 2027?

Timestamp: 1:40

134

135 Rabideau listed the big projects as providing flood resilience for building systems,
136 general energy efficiency and replacing exterior windows. The fund allows the
137 Selectboard to approve projects in series rather than one giant project that would involve
138 borrowing money. Hill reviewed how the new contractors for building maintenance will
139 provide near-term priorities.

140

141 Arneson reviewed the income and expenses associated with the Town Center Reserve
142 Fund from 7/1/2024 (balance of \$266,180) to 6/30/2050 (balance of \$336,629). The
143 proposal on the ballot would add about \$80,000. Arneson illustrated that this is to help
144 fund some of the larger projects looming for the Town Center building.

145

146

147 **Review and discuss Articles 10 - 18: Charitable Appropriations voted by Australian**
148 **ballot**

149 Timestamp: 1:44

150 [2e1 Vermont Family Network Appropriations FY27](#)

151 [2e2 Age Well Appropriations FY27](#)

152 [2e3 VT Center for Independent Living Appropriations FY27](#)

153 [2e4 COTS Appropriations FY27](#)

154 [2e5 OCCC Appropriations FY27](#)

155 [2e6 Steps to End Domestic Violence Appropriations FY27](#)

156 [2e7 Turning Point Appropriations FY27](#)

157 [2e8 Hope Works Appropriations FY27](#)

158 [2e9 Howard Center Appropriations FY27](#)

159

160 Arneson illustrated the different Charitable Appropriations requests provided in the
161 packet links.

162

163 Filkins stated that Vermont Family Network is an incredibly powerful non-profit in
164 Vermont that supports a lot of families.

165

166 Wolf presented the Age Well request and reported that they served around 122 Richmond
167 individuals with a total of around 104,602 services delivered. Age Well has 37 amazing
168 volunteers from Richmond that donate over 882 hours.

169

170 Wakim presented the Our Community Cares positive impact and long-term resilience for
171 our community. Wakim stated that they served over 2,000 meals and staffed 31 local
172 junior counselors and staff members. Rabideau stated that this is a homegrown program
173 that he fully supports.

174

175 Chapple-Sokel presented that Steps to End Domestic Violence provides support to
176 survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence and works towards prevention

177 through education, community training and increasing public awareness. Steps typically
178 serve about 1,500 people directly each year with 15-20 people who declare themselves as
179 Richmond residents. Richmond has regularly appropriated \$1,500 per year, which is the
180 same request this year.

181

182 Prosciak stated how the Howard Center provides services available in Richmond called
183 the Intensive Service Coordinators. This position provides services that are not often
184 billable to Medicaid or insurance providers.

185

186

187 **Adjourn**

188

189 *Sander moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

190 *Roll Call Vote: Filkins, Hill, Rabideau in favor. Wood absent. Motion approved.*

191

192 **Meeting adjourned at: 9:02 PM**

193

194 **Chat file from Zoom:**

195 00:48:26 Judy.Rosovsky: If the tax rate for the Conservation or Town Center
196 reserve fund is \$10/100,000 of property value, a \$500,000 property should be
197 contributing \$50 to those reserve funds

198 01:31:08 Chelsye: The definition of conserved land is per statute. Current use
199 land is not included. Floodplain is only included if it is otherwise conserved.

200 01:31:24 Chelsye: For the 30x30 calculations anyway.

201 01:44:00 MMCTV Erin Wagg: Judy - Where is section 2 ordinance to read about
202 this?

203 01:45:38 Judy.Rosovsky: Its on the town website under the Ordinances and
204 Policies tab. I will get you the link in a second

205 01:46:31 Judy.Rosovsky: The Conservation Reserve Fund policy is available
206 at [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/Conservation-Reserve-](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/Conservation-Reserve-Fund-Policy-2005.pdf)
207 [Fund-Policy-2005.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/Conservation-Reserve-Fund-Policy-2005.pdf)

208 Or go to www.richmondvt.gov Ordinances and Policies and look under Selectboard
209 Policies - thanks!

210 01:46:51 MMCTV Erin Wagg: Thank you!

211 01:47:05 Judy.Rosovsky: Reacted to "For the 30x30 calcul..." with 👍

212 01:49:01 Chelsye: How much money does a 1 cent tax bring in annually? Or
213 how much is it projected to?

214 01:53:15 Caitlin Filkins: Replying to "How much money does ..."

215 From what I'm remember it would be roughly \$80,000 annually. Need to double check
216 that is right

217 01:54:53 Judy.Rosovsky: Replying to "How much money does ..."That's what
218 Josh said, and it's tied to the final grand list amount

219 01:55:12 Judy.Rosovsky: Replying to "How much money does ..."

220 His number was 80340
221 01:55:22 Chelsye: Reacted to "From what I'm rememb..." with 👍
222 01:55:26 Chelsye: Reacted to "His number was 80340" with 👍
223 01:55:26 Caitlin Filkins: Reacted to "That's what Josh sai..." with 👍
224