

Town of Richmond Selectboard Meeting Minutes of October 17, 2022

Members Present: Bard Hill, David Sander, Jay Furr, Jeff Forward, June Heston

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner; Alyson Dengler, Police Officer; Benjamin Herrick, Interim Police Chief

Others Present: Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Allen Knowles, Amanda Cobb, Aubrey Weaver, Brandi Littlefield, Caitlin Littlefield, Cara LaBounty, Catherine McIntyre, Jim Monahan, Jesse Crary, Judy Rosovsky, Justin Spence, Ken Nussbaum, Lucas Chittenden, Mary Houle, Morgan Wolaver, Nancy Zimmy, Norman Perkins, Patty Brushett, Rebecca Roose, Stefani Hartsfield, Susan Glennon

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Welcome by: Heston

Public Comment:

Houle: I noticed on the website that the Fireworks and Parade Committee is not listed as an official committee. I have my flower reimbursement request for landscape and tree maintenance. I can spend \$1,500 from that line item on the budget which includes bulbs at the Town Center/Library and possible water access on the south side of building. This is the first time I as submitting a request which is for \$514.43. This is the first time I purchased bulbs.

Parent: I am here to report on the Celebrate Richmond VT LLC group. We are a non-profit organization started by Richmond resident to host events celebrating our Town throughout the year. Last July, the group organized the July 4 Celebration & Parade as the Fireworks and Parade Committee was not able to do so and the fireworks were already paid before COVID began. This year, the Celebrate Richmond has no desire to participate in the 2023 July 4th activities. We have found the same issue that nobody wants to do anything. Our funds are earmarked for other Richmond events. We would like to request permission from the Selectboard to use the sidewalk area in front of the portico and electricity from the Town Center on October 31. We plan on celebrating Halloween in a Spirited Style on the front lawn. There may be fairies spooking out of the portico. Starting in November, we are advertising for December "Light up Richmond" celebration. We are asking folks to decorate their homes & businesses and let us know if they are participating. There will be 3 categories with prizes: Classic, Animated, and "Over the Top" (think National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation).

Arneson: It doesn't need to be voted on by the board. I am providing permission. Enjoy the Trick or Treating and thank you for adding to the Halloween spirit.

Sander: Thank you for all your hard work this year for the Fourth of July Celebration.

Furr: Heidi Bormann did a lot as well.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda:

Heston: We have an addition of a Staff update which will be first. When the Fireworks & Parade Committee is ready, we will move the discussion for Town assistance in paying for Fourth of July fireworks.

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Staffing Update

Arneson: Water and Wastewater Superintendent Kendall Chamberlin has resigned effective at 5 pm today. I accepted his resignation and thanked him for his years of service. There is no severance package attached to this resignation. I will not be discussing details associated with the resignation as it is a personnel issue. I have been in touch with the existing Water and Wastewater staff regarding this development and we will be working with them for our operations plan going forward. My intention is to hire a full-time Water and Wastewater Superintendent. This process will take some time to complete. I have been in touch with State officials from both Water and Wastewater to inform them of this development and to get a plan in place to ensure Richmond meets State requirements for licensed operations in the immediate future.

Houle: If or when there is a lawsuit, then is the Town going to be paying for that or is it a private individual? If there is a lawsuit, then it is going to be against the Town and not just the Water & Sewer Commission.

Heston: I think it is too soon to consider it as we need to know what is in front of us.

Consideration of making an appointment to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Committee and reducing the committee size

Heston: Jay is the Chair of the ARPA Committee and will provide an update.

Furr: We have hard time keeping 9 people on the Committee. We currently have 3 open seats, 2 residential and 1 business owner. We might want to reduce the number of members to 7. There was also some discussion about a person who would like to join. We wondered if it was suitable as that person had a business arrangement with an existing member but was not present at our last meeting to speak to it.

Forward: I think we should table this issue as I was unable to attend that ARPA meeting. I would like to be part of the discussion around the number of members and new appointments at an upcoming ARPA meeting. We would then bring our recommendations back to the Selectboard.

Furr: I have no objections. The Committee did not take a firm action on it. The idea of not having business partners is not written down anywhere. When you consider our work, we are looking over and finding themes and recommendations from the public feedback. The money can be allocated for up to two more years and spent for four more

years. Now we are just looking over what we got. I do not see how business partners would cause us to make different recommendations.

Heston: Best practices are you do not have individuals related by associations. There are no written rules. The idea of having boards and committees is to cast your net wide to get as many perspectives as possible.

Forward: I do not see how we are related. We do have a business together but not in Richmond. I would like to discuss this in-depth with the Committee. How many people is a significant step. The Committee was not fully present at our most recent meeting. I do not see this as an urgent matter. I am happy to talk about whether this counts as a conflict of interest at the Committee level first before bringing back for Selectboard discussion. I respectfully ask that we table this.

LaBounty: We are having problems getting a quorum. I do not want to table the discussion about the number members so we can proceed with a quorum. I am fine tabling the discussion about a potential conflict of interest. Can the Selectboard consider going from 9 to 7 members on ARPA Committee?

Furr: The question about going from 9 to 7 members could be revisited. There is no urgent decision to be made. I think we have time to think about.

LaBounty: It is not fair to me as an ARPA Committee member to keep repeating meetings. We are kicking the can down the road because a Selectboard members was not present at a meeting.

Hill: Was there a motion at the ARPA Committee to reduce the number of members?

Furr: There was not a motion. It was discussed but I do not think it was voted on. We can go back and check the video.

Sander: These issues should go back to the ARPA Committee to discuss before bringing it back to us.

Hill moved to table this issue and respectfully ask the ARPA Committee to come back to us about the number of seats and their recommendation about the applicant. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote follows discussion

Heston: My professional opinion is boards speak as boards. It is not a best practice to have one missing board member lobby for revisiting an issue because they were absent. I encourage you not to do it again, but I understand why you would table it now.

Hill: It is compelling whether the Committee made a motion or not on the number of members.

Forward: It is not in the minutes.

Arneson: I think it was general consensus as I recall.

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

Consideration of making an appointment to the Transportation Committee

Heston: Keith Jennings has applied to serve on the Transportation Committee, his application is included in the packet. This is a committee that the Selectboard reduced to a minimum of five members with the option to expand if there was more interest in serving on the Committee. Currently there are five active members. He submitted a letter and application which was compelling.

Forward moved to appoint Keith Jennings to the Transportation Committee to term expiring in 2025. Sander seconded

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

Discussion of Town assistance in paying for Fourth of July fireworks

Glennon: I am Sue Glennon, and I am chairman of the Richmond Parade and Fireworks Committee. I have been on the Committee for 34 years. We have never asked for help to pay for the fireworks. We have always made our money on the day. We are asking now. We have tried to get younger people involved but it hasn't worked out. Three generations of my family have helped, and we get a lot of help from businesses. I want it to continue. Our last celebration was in 2019. We paid for the fireworks this year which was run by Celebrate Richmond VT. We do not have money for this year.

Hartsfield: I am Stefani Hartsfield, a Richmond resident. We are coming to you now because Northstar fireworks notified us in a letter that due to supply chains and increased costs, they will be providing fireworks on a first come, first-serve basis. The Parade and Fireworks Committee recently met to ask the Selectboard if (1) does the Town want to help pay for the fireworks and (2) is the Town willing to help put together the Fourth of July Celebration. We have some money to put toward this year's fireworks. There are also fundraising options like the Coin Drop.

Furr: Are you looking for us to support you or to support you with a certain amount of money?

Glennon: We currently have \$3,588.37 to go toward this year's fireworks.

Furr: If we do not act soon then Northstar will provide it to someone else.

Glennon: Every year, I sign a contract signed by the Police Chief and Fire.

Furr: It used to be \$10,000 now it is \$12,500. It will probably be a better show but there are only limited number of technicians, and we risk losing it.

Hartsfield: We do not have to pay upfront.

Furr: I think if we don't do this then we will have a lot of unhappy people.

Glennon: This year, the minimum show was \$10,000 and we paid \$1,000 for the band to keep it going. We were going to dissolve the Committee, but we have assets. The coin drop raises between \$4,500-\$5,000.

Hartsfield: Considering that we are probably asking for \$4,000.

Sander: You are \$9,100 short now so that is the ground we need to cover with a coin-drop.

Glennon: If we pay by February 1, then you get 10% more fireworks.

Furr: Can we authorize more coin-drops?

Heston: This is the only Committee that has to do fundraising. We thank you for all the years of hard work. I think we should be looking at why we are asking this Town Committee to do fundraising. If Celebrate Richmond VT decided to take this on, we could give it some money as a 501 (c)(3). This is a big deal for our Town, why are we struggling to pay for fireworks. Like all other Committee we would put notices for who is interested in joining. It will be a lot less cumbersome without fundraising.

LaBounty: I am thankful for the fireworks and parades over the years. I strongly recommend that the Selectboard not require the Fireworks and Parade Committee to raise money. They should not have to man the fry shack. I recommend that you give them a budget to manage the event. They would provide the bills from fireworks and band. Then maybe you would get more volunteers as it would be smaller jobs. It is a small amount of money for our budget. We should all be in as taxpayers. It would put the onus on the Selectboard for funding and oversight. You can help them get the deposit down now.

Glennon: We do not have to pay a deposit, but we have an incentive if we pay by February 1st.

Furr: We could close out the Fireworks and Parade Committee checking account and then pay for the rest.

Heston: We should not make any motions tonight as it is not warned. We can take this up at our budget conversations.

Hill: It is a budget discussion for this fiscal year with unassigned or general funds and then a discussion for future fiscal years as a budget line-item. This could be a future warned agenda item.

Heston: We would like to hear your recommendations for recruiting new members for this Committee and what we are asking them to do. You could still be on the Committee as well.

Cobb: Our main responsibility would be to plan the Fourth of July, Parade, Volunteers Green activities without having to worry about fundraising. Or are you still asking us to run the coin drop and the wagon? If you are doing all the finances, then I think we can probably handle it.

Furr: It will be a lot easier if there isn't fundraising. We could still do a coin drop to help fund additional endeavors. But the Selectboard could cover the basic costs.

LaBounty: The Fireworks and Parade Committee are here to officially ask for money at this warned meeting. They are trying to plan. The Committee is not going to dissolve. You have the ability to take the fundraising obligations for FY23 off their plate.

Heston: We need to know where this money is going to come from. We know we are going to do it. I would rather come to a meeting with a motion to approve a certain amount of money out of this line item.

LaBounty: So, the Parade and Fireworks Committee should write up what they need for money to put on the Fourth of July. Then you will come back here with a budget of the remainder due for the fireworks and any other money for the band. The assumption is you do not have to do the fry shack anymore and you can tell them of the assets that they can use.

Heston: Yes, we would like to know what your assets are, what your budget so we can know what we are committing to.

Glennon: The ballpark is \$15,000 but I have to sit down with my members to go over this.

Heston: You can put in the proposed income from the coin-drop. Then we can consider if it is worth running it as a fundraiser.

Sander: An inventory assessment is important, so we know if we need to rent cones and signs. Also, the concessions as people will still want fried dough, cheeseburgers, and French fries.

Heston: Do vendors currently rent space to be here for the Fourth of July?

Glennon: That's a lot of discussion. We asked for \$25 apiece for non-profits.

Furr: Celebrate Richmond let food vendors come in. If push comes to shove, we can do food vendors and trucks.

Heston: The Town should sign the contract for the fireworks.

Arneson: In essence we are going to commit to \$12,500.

Heston: It is unbudgeted which is why we cannot make a motion tonight. We do not know where that money is coming from.

Arneson: We do not have to sign the contract immediately.

Glennon: I talked to Northstar fireworks today. If you want 10% more then you pay by February 1st. If you don't then you can pay on the day, which is after July 1st. We ran

into that first year when the Selectboard asked us to find a firework company. You can sign the contract to commit.

Heston: I think letting them know we want to do it. Then we can figure out the financial piece. Our budget meetings start tomorrow. Once we have a sense of where the money is going to come from then we can make a motion. We know this is the direction we want to go. For the benefit of the taxpayer, we need to know exactly where we are taking the money from. And we also need to consider where we will fund it in future years.

LaBounty: Let Josh deal with the fireworks company. Tell them the Selectboard wants to continue on with this.

Heston: There needs to be communication about closing out the checking account.

Glennon: I will have a bank check sent to Northstar fireworks. I will have the bank provide proof that we closed our checking and savings account.

LaBounty: Please provide the check made out to Northstar to Josh who can send it in with the signed contract.

Arneson: After the next meeting, I will send in the check with the signed contract. I know DJ from Northstar so we can have a conversation about penciling us in as we should have a motion in 3 weeks. Once we have an official motion, I will send in the signed contract.

Glennon: Our goal 34 years ago was not to take Town funds. Things have changed. We have gotten older, and I still want to participate as much as I can. It is different now then it was 34 years ago.

Furr: You are taken for granted. I hope you know that. I want to express my thanks. You have increased the character and enjoyment of the Town.

Sander: It is a huge part of Richmond history and who we are.

Glennon: I am really excited about this.

Furr: Maybe you guys can be the Grand Marshalls.

Glennon: So many people have donated. I am the glorified asker.

Consideration of approving the addition of an office window to Library renovations

Arneson: One of the renovations is to put in a water fountain. The library door had to be removed for the installation of the drinking fountain. The door was an interior door for the office located directly behind the circulation desk. Staff felt a bit closed in, so they asked for a window to look out into the hallway. The contractor can add a window for \$750.00. I recommend voting on an amount not to exceed \$1000 for contingencies. Also, when we originally approved this project, we added \$322 for refrigeration to the drinking fountain. I had looked at a previous quote. The actual cost is \$1,522.00. We do not need

a motion on this as it is within the 5% contingency. It is not additional work and I apologize for the oversight.

Furr moved to approve the use of up to \$1,000.00 from the Town Center Fund to install an office window at the Richmond Free Library. Hill seconded.

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

Consideration of approving Conservation Fund request from Andrews Community Forest Committee for a Trail Review

Heston: We talked about this at our last meeting, and we asked for representation from the Andrews Community Forest Committee (ACFC). The request was not made in the proper process. Jesse Cray is here. We had a request last meeting to pay for a fine scale ecological trail review. We got the request from the Conservation Commission who approved it. The problem is work was done before the request was made. That is not the proper process as we want to approve it before you spend the money.

Cray: I am here as the Chair of the ACFC and Caitlin Littlefield is here with me as a member of committee as well and worked with Arrowwood. I am here today to apologize and explain what occurred. We had a public engagement process regarding the trail design that was leading up to May where we had a proposed trail design that was put up for public comment. We received about 130 comments and then we went through addressing the public comments. We used that to respond to those points publicly. One thing we identified was to further solidify the trail design. We re-hired our ecologist trail design team, Arrowwood, to do a fine-scale review of the trail design. In July, we approved that as a committee and applied to the Richmond Conservation Committee (RCC) to use Conservation reserve funding to pay for that. The application was submitted to the RCC on July 12. We knew the fine-scale review had to be done by late summer or early fall. They were trying to identify plants and such in that trail corridor where we might have to redirect the trail. In my mind, I had an approval within ACFC, we submitted the application to RCC and it was communicated to me that it was supported by RCC. Due to summer vacations, the application was not actually reviewed by the RCC until August 9th. Because they only had 4 members at that time, they wanted more information on the application. The re-application did not happen until early September. If I knew this, I would have come to the Selectboard for approval of our own funds. As it turned out, Arrowwood got communication of approval internally and put us on the calendar and ended up going in September and doing their field work. They have not provided us with a final report yet. That is supposed to come at the end of October.

Hill: I have two questions. Is there a contract with Arrowwood for this work? Typically, you would expect to see that to go through all the channels before it is approved. That would typically come from a Town Managers signature.

Littlefield: It was re-engaging with the exact same contractors.

Hill: The legal vehicle is the written contract and you do not have the authority to sign it. I can only guess that you have an oral agreement. The contract should go through the Town Manager. I am clarifying about how it is supposed to happen. It is not a question of the value of the work. I cannot make a verbal agreement on behalf of the Town. My second question is more about the science. The fine scale actually looks for evidence of

flora and fauna. I understand it is best practice to look at two seasons, the Fall and the Spring.

Littlefield: Yes, you want to capture as many seasons as possible. Arrowwood worked with Sinuosity, our trail design firm, walked the land and layout the trail in March or April. The time crunch was to get in another fine-scale review before the end of Fall.

Hill: I am sensitive to the issue of whether they actually did a fine-scale review in the Spring and the Fall. If they cannot say that then they are not done and they need to do it again next Spring.

Littlefield: We can get a sign off from Arrowwood to address that issue. They would speak to that this has been one of the most intensely poured over trail layouts in Vermont history. I do not think they would indicate much return on investment on doing another 50-foot trail review in March or April. There has been a winter review has been brought up. The question remains on going back for more information that would tilt the evidence for a different design.

Hill: We could anticipate that the same question will be asked. If cannot answer affirmatively that a fine-scale review occurred in multiple seasons, then I think we will have a problem.

Littlefield: The fine-scale review calls of a 50-foot review on either side of the trail. That has been done precisely the last two weeks. To conduct it in multiple seasons exceeds what is called for in the management plan. It has been conducted during the late Winter, early Spring by nature of the layout process.

Hill: We can anticipate revisiting this question about the scientific standard. When I read the management plan, I am not thinking about the scientific standard on fine-scale reviews. But if we have experts in the field saying the right way to do this fine-scale review is like something we have not done then this will be called into question at the ACFC and the Selectboard. I think saying words like “equivalent” will probably not sway with people who have different interests than trails. We are trying to balance the different perspectives: biking, hunting, flora, fauna, walker, hiker.

Littlefield: Duly noted, that is what we are trying to do as a committee. What would be beneficial is a written document from our ecologist colleagues that this fully passes muster in terms of a fine-scale review.

Hill: This is one of those 4 or 5 topics that come up where a lot of people feel strongly. We want to make as many people pleased or not displeased as possible.

Littlefield: I see our mandate as implementing the management plan provided by the Conservation easement. That is exactly what we are trying to navigate. We are trying to resolve the tricky part of providing recreation and absolute commitment to natural resource protection. We are trying to thread that needle. We are trying to stick to the management plan.

Hill: It is incredibly common for trails around Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont to have signs that say no mountain bikes due to erosion. I think there is the question of the impact of mountain bikes and maintaining trails with that level of erosion. That is what I have heard from people.

Littlefield: I hear that concern as well. The ACFC is trying to respect the public engagement that went on with the acquisition of this parcel. What resulted was a plan that did not exclude users. We are now looking at how to manage those trails and if we need to do seasonal closures to protect wildlife and other natural resources.

Crary: Our ACFC is 9 members with a very wide representation of interests. It is doing a good job of the balancing of the management plan. We did have a trail design that was scaled back for the sake of ecological interests.

Houle: Mountain bikes increase erosion and pass along invasive plants. I have experiences of being told to shut up when reminding people that the Safford trail was closed during mud season. This is true for bikers and hikers. A couple of idiots are going to ruin it for everyone.

Littlefield: I think we are finally seeing in the mountain bike community some public engagement.

Furr moved to approve the request from the Andrew's Community Forest Committee for the use of \$3,500 from the Conservation Reserve Fund for an Ecological Fine-Scale Trail Review at the Andrew's Community Forest. Hill seconded.

LaBounty: Will you be providing a contract and invoice for this service?

Heston: We have the invoice.

LaBounty: The contract will confirm the scope of work provided in the invoice.

Monahan: I believe Josh has in an email with Judy from RCC about the continuation of the contract. That is my recollection when we were going to the RCC for the original application.

Hill: There should be a contract.

LaBounty: Moving forward can you confirm for me how many committees have the authority to hire outside contractors without contracts being signed by the Town Manager. Please have that research done for the next Selectboard meeting so that you are aware of all the committees so you can notify them that they should not be hiring without a contract signed by the Town Manager.

Heston: It should be zero. It might be good to check into that.

Littlefield: I am not sure if the application in the packet is the most recent one. The most recent one I forwarded to Josh and Judy.

Rosovsky: I can send that again if we do not have the correct one.

Arneson: I will find out.

Hill: The point of the contract is to properly procure something for the taxpayers. We need to be clear about what we are going to pay for the desired product.

Heston: We cannot really vote as we do not have the correct contract in front of us. The one we got was from July.

Littlefield: The most recent one should be dated September 9th.

Arneson: I think we wait until we get to proper contract. At the next meeting, we can hold the vote. It will be a delay for the contractor, but it is the proper process.

Furr: I would like to withdraw the motion.

Monahan: There is an email from July 13 that says this is a continuation of Arrowwood's work and three bids were not necessary. That was what we were going on.

Heston: We will table this.

Hill: We are committed to a fine scale review but to be continued.

Forward: There has been a lot of public debate about the urgency of this. We could not have made a decision without you here. That is why it was not urgent for us at the last meeting.

Arneson: We still need a new contract for the new work with the amount of money that it is going to cost.

Update on use of wood from emerald ash borer tree removal project

Heston: There are some boards stored in Jeff's barn and we are going to hear from Caitlin about what is going on.

Littlefield: Last March, Limbwalker Tree Services to carry out ash tree removal along Cochran and Dugway Roads. The trees were too big for Highway to remove. We took down about a dozen ash trees that were likely to die within the next ten years. Another contractor processed the wood with a portable sawmill and milled it to 5/4 inches about 6-8 feet long and 18 inches wide. Jeff offered some barn space to let that cure. The hope is that it can be used for trim in Town Center renovations. There was an additional quantity of wood cut for firewood. We engage a local non-profit, Wood for Good, which distributes firewood to households in need. It is an estimated 9-10 chords of wood.

Forward: Ash dries nicely but it needs to season properly so we couldn't leave it outside. It will also take awhile for us to decide how they might be used at the Town Center.

Littlefield: Wood for Good has been delivering and collecting firewood. Anybody can go to their website for a request. The owners and volunteers know that wood is meant for

Richmond residents. Some of the wood from here might be going to some households in Huntington and Bolton but within the radius of Richmond. I have posted on Front Porch Forum.

Forward: This is pretty green wood. It would be better used next season. It is a wonderful firewood and furniture wood.

Littlefield: Wood for Good knows that as well.

LaBounty: If an announcement comes from a Town Official, it might help promote Richmond resident use.

Littlefield: I will get a sign up at the Food Shelf as well.

Houle: It would be great to have something in the Town Annual Report about Wood for Good.

Littlefield: We might work with Pete Gosselin to have some estimates on ash trees still in the right of way. We could get ahead of what it might take to remove them over the next ten years.

Forward: I think the estimate is around \$1,500-\$2,000. We will deal with it one way or another: before or after they fall.

Littlefield: It is much cheaper to be proactive. Most arborists will not climb them if a third of the canopy has died back. Proactive removal where you do not have to bring in a crane is much cheaper.

Rosovsky: I would like to acknowledge the work Caitlin has done to spearhead this effort.

Consideration of adopting the 2022 Chittenden County, Vermont Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Heston: There is a lot in this plan that is 400 pages. I am suggesting a change on the Richmond plan. I think it is on page 42 that it says there are 6 residential properties that have repeated flood damage. One of them is non-residential so it should be 5 residential.

Furr: The Richmond Annex also says the main river in Town is the Huntington River.

Forward: I found quite a few issues. On page 7 it says there are no public health care facilities.

Arneson: I sent an update this afternoon. That was probably changed. Jay and Ravi sent in edits as well.

Forward: I think we should list all of them, Richmond Family Medicine, Richmond Dental, Richmond Animal Hospital. Under energy on page 7, it does not list Vermont Electric Co-Op. They should also list the substation out by the interstate exchange. We also have a 2.2-megawatt solar array out there. That is a significant part of infrastructure.

On page 19, they have a list of storm events since 1950. They have things listed like flash flood and flood. What is the difference? It is not defined in this document. Similar to high wind and strong wind. What does that mean. There is winter storm and winter weather. I agree we should approve this as it is difficult to put together these plans.

Hill: I think you should go through Ravi as he may have already put in those revisions.

Arneson: There was a revision that was updated Friday and then this afternoon.

Forward: On page 22, it talks about our bridges as functional deficient, structural deficient and one as scour critical. That would be important for us to know.

Heston: We have a new version that was sent out this afternoon. It needs to be voted on by October 31.

Arneson: Ravi, do you think we can vote on it with adopted changes.

Venkataraman: Yes, I think it is fine if we have a laundry list of all the changes like Jay and June sent me. They are very prompt about making those changes. It will be easy to transmit everything that was amended to the consultant and the State.

Forward: It talks about us not having a stormwater management plan. We have a stormwater master plan from 2018. I do not know what the difference is.

Furr: On page 5, there is only one Chittenden County community with high risk for major transportation incident and we are sitting in it. We do not have a lot dedicated about what we would do. I would like to see us pay attention to what we would do if something like that happened.

Forward: 10-15 years ago, there was a tanker truck that overturned on the interstate and they had to evacuate the school.

Furr: It is something I would like to look at in the future.

Heston: I suggest we have it right and send suggestions to Ravi.

Forward: I think we should approve the plan as it is and have Ravi coordinate a list of modifications.

Houle: We had previous issues with them listing emergency shelters that were not aware of that designation, like Cochran's and churches.

Forward: Camels Hump Middle School is now our emergency shelter.

Heston: Is Camels Hump a cooling center since they don't have A/C.

Forward moved to adopt the 2022 Chittenden County, Vermont Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan with amendments. Hill seconded.

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

Consideration of approving an easement for relocation of Rt. 2 at the Fire Station

Arneson: VTrans is putting in a new bridge east of the Fire Station that goes over the interstate. Rt 2 is shifting to the north of the existing bridge. They are asking for an easement into the Fire Station property. We met with VTrans to confirm the new Fire Station driveway would be higher and shorter and improve the slope. Engineer Tyler Billingsley has reviewed the plans and our attorney has reviewed the legal documents. Both indicated we are okay to proceed with signing the easement.

Hill: They will also deal with the outfall of stormwater and the culvert that was failing under Rt. 2.

This topic was initially discussed a few months ago. VTrans is moving Rt. 2 to the north in order to accommodate a replacement of the bridge that spans I89 to the east of the Fire Station. The town initially had concerns about the amount of land that would be needed and the slope of the fire department driveway. VTrans will be raising Rt. 2 in elevation and moving it closer to the Fire Department. The result is that the driveway will be shorter and have less slope. Documents are included in the packet.

Furr moved to approve the Option and Warranty Deed of Easement as presented by VTrans for the easement at the Fire Station to accommodate the movement of Rt. 2 for which the Town of Richmond will be paid \$6,550 and to appoint Town Manager Josh Arneson as the duly authorized agent. Sander seconded.

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

Update on Community Outreach Program

The FY22 Annual Report from the Community Outreach Program is included in the packet. Interim Chief Ben Herrick and Assistant Director for Community Outreach Brandi Littlefield will attend the meeting to discuss the program and answer questions.

Littlefield, Herrick and I reviewed the annual report and discussed usage of the program by Richmond. Littlefield recommended that we do another push on the police Facebook page and on Front Porch Forum to remind residents that they can call directly to Community Outreach. She noted that one of their goals is for people to call Community Outreach directly and reduce the number of calls to police.

We also reviewed how Richmond PD uses the program. It became apparent that officers are handing out cards about Community Outreach to people who they think could benefit from the service, but those people only show up in the statistics if they actually call Community Outreach. As a result, the number of times an officer actually informs a resident about Community Outreach is greater than the numbers in the report. Littlefield suggested that the officers follow up with an email to Community Outreach with contact information for everyone to whom they hand a card. This way the resident will receive a call from Community Outreach offering help, which may increase the chances that a person in need will get the help that they need. This will also be logged as a contact in the system with Community Outreach and show up in the reporting. Herrick stated he will

direct the officers to being doing this immediately. As a result, we may see an increase in usage numbers in the FY23 Q2 report.

Arneson: The Community Outreach Program of the Howard Center has been Richmond's partners for about 3 years now. The last couple of years, Brandi Littlefield has walked us through the annual report. Chief Herrick is also here to share how Richmond uses the program. Our numbers do look a little low. Richmond Police Officers will hand out a card to people they feel could use the Outreach program. Unless the person calls, it doesn't get recorded. Brandi recommended that the officer follows up to share the contact information with Community Outreach so they can talk about services for that resident. This will help the resident who might need help. It will also show up on our report to illustrate we are utilizing the program. Individuals can also make recommendation calls. We also want people to know they might contact Community Outreach if the Police are not required.

Littlefield: I am Brandi Littlefield, the Assistant Director for First Call of Chittenden County and oversee Community Outreach Program. I will share my screen to introduce some of the Community Outreach Team members. Our purpose is to work with local and regional law enforcement to quickly respond to individuals with unmet social service needs, often due to mental health or substance use issues. There are multiple services that we provide. Services may be self-referral, engaged by a Community Outreach team member, or referred from service providers, police, family/friend, merchants and concerned citizens. We collaborate with all entities within the community. The graph from FY21 shows Richmond with a total of 54 initial contacts for services (Q1 = 14, Q2 = 8, Q3 = 16, Q4 = 16). For FY22, the total was 72 initial contacts for services (Q1 = 13, Q2 = 25, Q3 = 12, Q4 = 22). The Richmond numbers seem small compared to other Towns, but they are actually on par to how they are funded and utilized. The numbers will continue to increase based on what we discussed with Josh and the Police Department. One of our goals is to decrease the number of calls from emergency services and increase the number initiated from community members. The FY22 Q4 shows Police calls at 3 and 12 calls from community members. The FY22 Annual Services By Town shows that Richmond uses 3% with Chittenden County where Richmond contributes 2% of the funds. We collect feedback and surveys and 95% of our stakeholders agreed that our community is better off because of the work of the Community Outreach Team. We collect feedback from the individuals who receive services with 93% received the help they needed and 100% felt the staff treated them with respect. It also shows the important of face-to-face services and the impact of COVID as 36% found the video/phone options as effective as meeting in person.

Hill: Thank you for this. Is the funding proportional to the per capita between different Towns? When I contemplate the bar charts, it is interesting that Hinesburg started out higher and now they are similar.

Littlefield: Both Hinesburg and Richmond are under-utilized for services. Richmond and Hinesburg are pretty spread out. Now that the Police will do the follow-up email, it will increase your numbers. It will also help provide a warm introduction to follow up.

Hill: Hinesburg and Richmond are around 4,000 people and Shelburne is around 6,000. The last quarter if they are a third higher in population that per capita would almost be identical. What is the right metric to say what our market penetration is? In the past, I

have floated the idea of having social services like the Howard Center having space in the Town Center. We could have an agency footprint in our community.

Dengler: I am Office Alyson Dengler, and I have had the pleasure of working with your agency in Colchester and Richmond. I cannot give them enough praise. They are a phenomenal resource our Town cannot afford to lose. We need to utilize them more. We do not have enough agencies in Town that are aware of the resource. Shelburne has four different locations to house transient populations, so their need and requirement are higher. Richmond does not have that population as they typically move on because we have nothing to offer. I will always make an effort to get a team member if I am making an on-site visit. I am so thankful for their support and resources. If it is a safe environment, then I can walk away knowing that a person is being monitored. The Richmond Food Shelf and schools are also places where we could increase awareness about these services.

Furr: Where on the website would I or another community member would find out about the Community Outreach Program?

Dengler: Whenever I interact with people, and I say the Howard Center they get a sour taste in their mouth. If I say First Call, then they want to disassociate. If I say Community Outreach, the interaction is much more positive and welcoming of help.

Littlefield: I can where the program is described but I do not see our number on the website. I will follow up with that.

Forward: Do you interact with the school districts.

Littlefield: We do a limited amount during the school day as schools have their own programs and resources. We have found we ruffle some feathers if we do not follow behavior support or other school plans. We try to help de-escalate a situation. We really want to encourage to be part of the transition to home.

Forward: The Our Community Cares Camp over the summer might also be aware of some services they may need.

LaBounty: Do you have a contract with Howard Center where you can transfer personal information?

Heston: HIPAA is only in regard to medical providers.

LaBounty: I know schools have restrictions. There is difference between handing someone a card and giving out their personal information.

Heston: Does the Police Officer need to inform a person that they are referring them to your program?

Littlefield: Our specialists all have access to the police database as well as the Howard Center electronic health records. They can see both of those databases. They are not able to share any clinical information back to law enforcement. They can say they made a connection but that is it. HIPAA does not allow them to share more.

Heston: A Police Officer or a community resident can refer someone to the Community Outreach Program.

LaBounty: Do you have the percentage of people who received services who actually filled out the surveys?

Littlefield: I do not have that with me.

LaBounty: Do we have this program listed on our Richmond website?

Arneson: The Community Outreach is on the website (<https://www.richmondvt.gov/departments/police> and <https://www.richmondvt.gov/community/community-services>)

Brushett: I have been very interested in this program since we heard about from the Chief in South Burlington. What is the plan for what we should be doing to get the word out. Who should we be working with? How does this work in other Towns.

Littlefield: Our outreach specialists go to all the Richmond businesses. We have flyers that explain when to contact us versus law enforcement. They go into different offices. I have given all the Towns to promote the program with different media for websites, Front Porch Forum, and Facebook. Our team goes to many community events. We introduce ourselves to anyone who may need support. We will go out in pairs if we know of places where first responders have to go more frequently.

Brushett: What can we do here in Richmond to support mental health issues. I would volunteer to promote notices out every few weeks for resources and phone numbers. We could also contact ministers and priests.

Littlefield: You can use the social media information I send to Josh.

Hill: The Howard Center has pages and pages of programs. I think we should promote the “unmet social service needs often due to mental health of substance use issues.” We should turn it around that the presenting issue is social service needs and not a mental health service need per se.

Forward: I have a money question. It looks like Hinesburg uses services twice as much as we do but pays half as much. We are about the same size. I don't how that works.

Hill: My guess it is more about rounding up or rounding down small percentages.

Arneson: We do a contract with them for services. It is not a charitable appropriation.

Discussion of priorities from the Bike Walk Trails Plan

Heston: All of the options are fascinating to read.

Venkataraman: There are a plethora of options, so I don't know where to start. When I talked to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) about it, they

suggested a deeper investigation on the most effective Cochran Road consider its length and we do not have a specific option. We do have a vision from the Bike Walk Trails Plan. A mid-term item to pursue is a Traffic Calming Study to get a precise sense of what options should be installed where. In the interim, fixes like paint and quick build fixes. We need to figure out how to monitor and evaluate what some of those permanent options are.

Heston: We are ordering the speed signals and the option of having temporary speed bumps. I agree we need to look at short-term, middle-term, and long-term options. Is this something important to do right away or when all the recreation is happening?

Venkataraman: Both. The speed bumps are a whole other thing. We need to talk to Pete about the maintenance about any temporary speed bumps. There have been some conversations with traffic engineers about the effectiveness of speed cushions and speed bumps. Sometimes people speed up to the cushion/bump, go over it, speed up, and then slow down before the next cushion/bump. The placement and when to do it should be considered and then figure out a plan.

Hill: People have opinions about what they think will work. Ravi is suggested evidence-based practices. For instance, what happens in downtown Burlington might not apply to Cochran Rd. That is why traffic engineers exist. I did some modest research that suggests that the radar signs work if consistent. I think it is worth getting the expert's input on what would work specific to the situation.

Heston: A good example of that is striping. If you take stripes away it decreases speeds. I think we need to talk about the Traffic Calming Study so that we know what we should do instead of what everyone else thinks we should do.

Hill: The CCRPC says that the fog lines reduce traffic accidents, but I am not sure if it reduces bike, vehicle, pedestrian interactions. It might work for the vehicle but less safe for others.

Venkataraman: There are a multitude of factors with striping like road width, the lane width, location, fog line, and center line. Aside from striping there are many factors that might influence whether a vehicle goes faster or slower.

Forward: I am hoping the Transportation Committee will do an evaluation of the Bike and Pedestrian plan. They could come up with priorities. There are 2 dozen in that plan that range from no cost to millions of dollars. I feel like the Transportation has more experience and time to research the options and give us some recommendations.

Heston: We will have more information for the next meeting.

Venkataraman: The Transportation Committee is tasked with making sure the roadway is safe and accessible for all users. They have a statement on the website that outlines their objectives and goals

(https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Transportation_Committee/General/RTC-Trans-Implementation-Plan-2020-06-04-FINAL.pdf).

Knowles: The language comes out of the 2018 Town Plan. The basic charge was to work on achieve complete streets in Richmond.

LaBounty: Cochran is a recorded truck route for the Town of Richmond. Are we dealing with that issue at the same time as putting in speed bumps? I care about that it needs to be safe for bicycles and pedestrians, but you allow bicyclists to go four wide over areas that are not a flat stretch making it difficult for truckers. We are encouraging recreational use of Cochran Rd. when it is a truck route. You have to deal with both. You should not be hindering the regular vehicle traffic with a speed limit that is not being enforced.

Hill: We have roads that look like they were in the 1930s. Instead of horses and slower, smaller vehicles and now we have lots of different uses. Project #21 was Cochran Rd Full Share Use Path at projected cost of \$5.6 million. The price point is daunting. Can you fit all these different uses on the existing roadway.

LaBounty: I do like fog lines for young drivers.

Houle: It also helps to see animals crossing or joggers.

Heston: We hear you. We will continue to talk about this next meeting.

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes

*Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 10/3/22 as presented. Hill seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

Purchase Orders

Consideration of approving use of Town Center funds for elevator repair at the Richmond Free Library

Arneson: The elevator at the Richmond Free Library had been inoperable for several weeks. Library director Rebecca Mueller was able to hire Alpha Elevator Company to repair the elevator. The total cost was \$3,360.25. It is now functioning correctly. Mueller is asking if the cost can be paid out of the Town Center Fund. The MOU between the Selectboard and the Library Trustees assigns larger maintenance costs for the Library building's structure and systems to the Town. This would seem seems like a reasonable request.

Heston: It seems to me that it is relevant.

*Sander moved to approve the use of \$3,360.25 from the Town Center Reserve Fund to pay for the elevator repair at the Richmond Free Library. Furr seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Forward, Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

Sander moved to approve PO#3770 to MS Martin Enterprises Inc for Four Onsite Radar Feedback Signs with Data Tracker and Flashing Blue Lights not the exceed \$20,779.84. Furr seconded.

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

Forward moved to approve PO#4558 to Black River Design for architectural services for Town Center visioning process not to exceed \$65,000.00. Hill seconded.

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

Forward moved to approve PO#4556 to Opus Corporation for Library AC System, Drinking Fountain, Mold mitigation, automatic door installation and for Town Center automatic door installation and fire alarm installation not to exceed \$179,100.00. Hill seconded.

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

Warrants

Hill moved to approve the warrants with the exception for the ecological trail review as presented from 10/17/2022. Sander seconded.

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

Discuss Items for Next Agenda

*Purpose and use of Police electric vehicle and staffing

*The reappraisal for people who did not get permits for changes since last appraisal

*ARPA

*Fireworks

*ACFC Trails design and management plan

Adjournment

Furr moved to adjourn. Sander seconded

Roll Call Vote: Furr, Heston, Hill, Sander in favor. Forward absent. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm

Chat file from Zoom:

02:26:31 Brandi Littlefield: <https://howardcenter.org/news-archive/howard-centers-community-outreach-program-expands-to-richmond-vermont/>

02:28:21 Brandi Littlefield: <https://howardcenter.org/mental-health/community-support/>

02:58:52 Ravi Venkataraman:

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Transportation_Committee/General/RTC-Trans-Implementation-Plan-2020-06-04-FINAL.pdf