

Town of Richmond Selectboard Meeting Minutes of August 1, 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; Benjamin Herrick, Interim Police Chief

Others Present: Meeting was recorded by MMCTV, Allen Knowles, Anthony Cambridge, Bob Safford, Bonny Steuer, Chuck Gilroy, Connie Van Eeghen, Jenna Baker, John Cohn, Kevin McAleer, Lauck Parke, Martha Nye, Mary Houle, Steve Bower

Call to Order: 7:00pm

Welcome by: Heston

Public Comment:

Houle: Most of the day on Saturday the Rooted Vermont Bike Race was out of control. Two cars should not be leading bicyclists. Bicyclists need to observe stop signs.

Arneson: I have received many emails and voicemails about this weekends event and will follow up with the event organizers. The road closure was on Sunday and there was the closed parking lot at The Big Spruce on Friday, which was associated with the event.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda: None

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Consideration of approving closure of Baker St. for a neighborhood block party

Heston: This is an annual request from the residents on Baker St. More information regarding their request is included in the packet.

Hill moved to approve the closure of Baker St. for a block party from 3:30 – 8:00pm on September 10, 2022 with a rain date of September 11, 2022. Furr seconded.

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

Consideration of approving a date change for the Midwives Move Mountains fundraising running event

Heston: This event was approved at the last Selectboard meeting for Sunday, October 2, 2022. The organizers are requesting a date change to hold the event on Saturday, October 1, 2022. More information is included in the packet.

Furr moved to approve changing the date of the Midwives Move Mountains fundraising running event from Sunday, October 2, 2022 to Saturday, October 1, 2022. Hill seconded.

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

Consideration of making an appointment to the Parking Advisory Committee

Heston: There is one vacant seat on the Parking Advisory Committee which runs to 2024. Chuck Gilroy has submitted an application for the open seat. His application is included in the packet.

Gilroy: I like what the Parking Advisory Committee is doing and I think I represent residents who have seen Dugway Road change from a shortcut to a destination.

Forward: I welcome his involvement.

Furr moved to appoint Chuck Gilroy to the vacant seat on the Parking Advisory Committee with a term that will expire in 2024. Hill seconded.

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

Consideration of amending the permit for parking at the intersection of Johnnie Brook Rd. and Kenyon Rd. near the bridge on Rt. 2 over the Winooski River

Arneson: This is a parking area that was established last year through the work of the Parking Advisory Committee. The State recently found that there is a stormwater permit for a treatment swale that runs through this parking area. According to the permit the swale must remain undisturbed.

Road Foreman Pete Gosselin, Parking Advisory Committee Chair Kevin McAleer, and I met with representatives from VTrans at the site. We came up with a temporary solution to reconfigure the parking area to avoid the swale. VTRans drew up a plan which is included in the packet. The Parking Advisory Committee voted to approve this plan at their 7/25/22 meeting. Should the Selectboard vote to approve this plan we will submit the permit amendment to VTrans and the Road Foreman Pete Gosselin will reconfigure the parking area in accordance with the new plan.

McAleer: It is a very popular destination for bikers. This is a win-win for everyone.

Hill move to amend VTrans permit number 45043 regarding the parking area at the intersection of Kenyon Rd. and Johnnie Brook Rd. to reconfigure the parking area to avoid impeding on the stormwater swale. Furr seconded.

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

Consideration of approving the final report for Compensation Study

Arneson: This is more of a housekeeping item as the Selectboard has already approved a pay grid from the study for FY23. The final study is included in the packet. The final study compiles the final pay grids for the Town, Library, and Water and Wastewater into one document.

Hill moved to approve the final draft of the compensation study. Furr seconded.

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

Consideration of approving a privacy policy for the town website

Arneson: We are preparing to launch the new website the week of August 1 – 5. Ecopixel, the website developer, noted that we do not currently have a privacy policy. They provided a privacy policy which explains to users what data is tracked when they use the site. This also ties into tracking for google analytics. The policy is included in the packet.

Furr: This is a perfectly good policy.

Hill moved to approve the privacy policy. Furr seconded.

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

Consideration of approving a response to a letter from the State regarding Common Level of Appraisal

Heston: We received a letter from the State noting that our Common Level of Appraisal has dropped below 85% and therefore the Town is under orders to reappraise. The Town began a reappraisal last year, so we are on our way to compliance. Still, we need to fill out a form to acknowledge receipt of the letter and submit Form RA-308 to the State.

Arneson: We have 150 days to return Form RA-308

Furr moved to approve the Municipal Response to Reappraisal Order. Hill seconded.

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

Consideration of approving an agreement with Owner's Representative Jay Labare for construction management for Town Center and Library Building Projects

Arneson: When we asked for proposals for Owner's Representatives the scope of work included the bid phase and construction phases of projects at the Town Center and Library. We selected Jay Labare of Apex Consulting as the Owner's Representative and contracted with him for the bid phase of several projects. We are now embarking on the construction phase of several projects at the Town Center and Library with Opus Corporation. The Town Center and Library Committee asked Labare for a proposal to provide construction management services for these projects. Labare has estimated 10 hours per week of work for 14 weeks at \$100 per hour for a total not to exceed amount of \$14,000. I spoke with Jay, and he indicated that he estimated on the high end and if the actual work takes less time then he will only bill for the hours actually worked. The Town Center and Building Committee recommends moving forward with Apex Consulting for this work.

Furr moved to approve Apex Consulting, LLC to provide construction management services for projects at the Town Center and Library in an amount not to exceed \$14,000 with funding to come from the Town Center Reserve Fund and to appoint Town Manager Josh Arneson as the duly authorized representative. Hill seconded.

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

Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment report

Bower: A report on the EVSE station is included in the packet. The Town charges the cost of the electricity. The grant covered more than 90% of the cost to put the charger into the Town Center. We have been operating since December 2020. In the last year, we charged enough for a vehicle to drive 12,000 miles and saved the equivalent of 475 gallons of gasoline. Though the year, the number of unique users and general activity increased. At this point it is only 37 days where two vehicles were charging at the same time. The Police Tesla will increase that use. Next year's report will provide further details.

Arneson: The Tesla has been in use but has not been using the Town charger. That may change in the future.

Bower: There is an option to put in additional charging stations if the demand increases.

Forward: We need an adapter to connect to the charge point for the Tesla. I do not think there is problem with people charging too long. The last time I used the charger for more than four hours was during a Selectboard meeting.

Hill: Can we find the number of unique users who use the charging station per day or per month or per year?

Heston: Are we only able to add a Level 2 charger to our current system.

Bower: Yes, it would have to be two charges at the same type. We might need a new transformer if we went to a super-charger. The older Tesla's needed an adapter, but the new ones are able to use the Level 2 charger.

Follow up on exploring options for Police Department structure

Heston: After the last meeting I sent a plan to plan email to Bard and Josh recommending that this process not involve the full Selectboard because the decision will come back to the full Selectboard. I am proposing that there be a committee to include the Town Manager, the Police Chief, and two Selectboard members from Richmond and Hinesburg. It appears that Williston does not want to be part of the discussions at this point.

Arneson: I spoke with the Williston Town Manager and they would be willing to listen to what Richmond needs and would then respond after they knew more details. They are not ready to engage in a back and forth conversation at this point.

Heston: We would look to have representatives from each Town as well as a consultant along with Trevor Whipple from VLCT. We could take the next 6 weeks to do a SWAT analysis to see what direction we would want to go in. The result of this would come back to the Selectboard for a decision. I am hearing that the community really wants community policing. They want to know the police officers and have them accessible. We have a lot of work to do to decide if we want to partner with Hinesburg and if we do then there will be more work to form the partnership.

Hill: I have seen the majority of people want a local police department.

Heston: Some have suggested we use the State police, but they are short staffed and if they have to cover town's they cover emergency calls only. They are helpful when they need to be there, but they can't always be there. Regionalization is something that needs to be looked at and we would be a pilot if we decide to do it.

Furr: The Hinesburg Chief spoke about how Hinesburg values community policing. I think they would be a good partner.

Heston: We still need our police officers. We are looking at a restructuring. We are committed to looking at an option of how to administer of police services. We are not looking to make cuts.

Herrick: There is concern in our current staff about what it looks like if we are to merge. We like the way things are currently working but just want more information on what it might look like for our workforce.

Heston: It could take 6 months or more and there is nothing being done immediately. There is no officers job in question.

Hill: It would be helpful to know what are the conditions and job experience that your current staff appreciate.

Heston: Likewise, it would be good to know what else can we improve.

Forward: I would like how to get more by cooperating with Hinesburg not just for less costs but better service.

Houle: The value of a Police Department has a positive impact on quality of life.

Heston: This is an opportunity to look at what are the options for the people of Richmond.

There was a question in the chat about the optimal geographic area for community policing.

Herrick: Community Policing is more of a mindset than a specific population or a geographic area's size.

Cambridge: Community Policing is consistency with the officer that you have and being proactive, that includes walking, biking and being willing to help. It isn't limited to any geographic area.

Heston: We will plan to have something by mid-September.

Houle: We should investigate if this would necessitate a charter change. That takes a lot of time.

Discussion of amending personnel guidelines to include Juneteenth as a holiday for staff

Furr: Do we want to swap Juneteenth for a holiday? It is important to recognize it but I am fine with giving people an option.

Hill: We should also change the recognition of Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Heston: I think we should remove Town Meeting Day as a holiday and replace it with Juneteenth and have it be a floating holiday like Town Meeting Day.

Forward: I think it makes it more complicated to swap.

Sander: I think Town Meeting should remain as a recognized holiday.

Heston: Most of our staff has to work on Town Meeting Day when our employees need to be working. If it is floating, they can take it another time. Town Meeting Day is not a day when we can give our staff off. We currently recognize it as a floating holiday.

Houle: Town Meeting Day should be a regular workday.

Hill moved to amend the personnel guidelines to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Hill: We could add Juneteenth as a floating holiday and reduce the personal days by one day.

Forward: I think we should table this motion until the next meeting so Josh can collect feedback from staff.

Quarterly update from Richmond Rescue

Heston: Included in the packet is the quarterly update from Richmond Rescue.

Hill: We are fortunate to have Richmond Rescue.

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders

Sander moved to approve PO# 4453 to UVMHN Home Health Hospice for a Charitable Appropriations not to exceed \$10,500. Furr seconded.

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

Warrants

Forward: I am wondering about the VGS bill. It shows that we used gas in June and July. That does not seem correct.

Arneson: I will follow up on that.

Forward: Have we received the reimbursement from Green Mountain Power on the street lights?

Arneson: I don't know but will follow up on that.

Minutes

Heston: The 7/18 Minutes Public Comments should read "and someone is there when they are supposed to be there." On pg 6 it should read "We were not happy to learn about the nighttime work after the contract was signed."

Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 7/18/22 as corrected. Hill seconded.

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

Discuss Items for Next Agenda

*Juneteenth holiday updates

*Anti-bias training

*Traffic calming Cochran Rd

Adjournment

Furr moved to adjourn. Hill seconded

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm

Chat file from Zoom:

00:14:01 MMCTV Erin: Who is the back of room speaker?

00:14:16 Jay Furr: Besides Mary Houle?

00:14:34 Jay Furr: I believe that's Chuck Gilroy

00:14:35 Jeff Forward: Chuck Gilroy

00:14:43 MMCTV Erin: Thanks!

00:26:26 MMCTV Erin: WOOHOOO!

00:41:40 MMCTV Erin: Could he come to microphone?

00:44:26 Allen Knowles: Thank you Steve Bower for the clear data summary.

01:00:12 Steve Bower: The ChargePoint charging station had 111 unique drivers/vehicles charging in 2021, and so far has had 131 unique drivers/vehicles in 2022. (The report in tonight's package showed 201 total unique drivers in 2021, but that was the sum of unique drivers in each month, so some of those drivers charged in multiple months.)

01:06:18 Allen Knowles: Do the police officers have a sense of how large a population and how large a geographic area are compatible with community policing; a "beat" so to speak?

01:12:28 Jay Furr: (Chuck Gilroy is speaking)