

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission**
3 **Minutes of November 20, 2023**
4

5 **Members Present:** Bard Hill, David Sander, Erin Farr, Jay Furr, Morgan Wolaver
6

7 **Members Absent:** None
8

9 **Staff Present:** Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town
10 Manager; Steve Cote, Water Resources
11

12 **Others Present:** The meeting was recorded for MMCTV, Chris Perren, Dairy DeGraaf,
13 Gary Bressor, Harold DeGraaf, Heidi Bormann, Nicholas DeGraaf, Peter Bormann
14

15 **MMCTV Video:**

16 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIKdskGaMS4&list=PLm9TgJr7n7xfcKxRghWWSdATHBzGQTgkK&index=2>
17

18 **Call to Order: 6:00 pm**
19

20 **Welcome:** Wolaver
21

22 **Public Comment:** None
23

24 **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:** None
25

26 **Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**
27

28 **Minutes:**

29
30 *Furr moved to approve the Minutes of 11/6/23 meeting as presented. Sander seconded.*

31 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander in favor. Wolaver abstains. Motion approved.*
32

33 **Warrants:**

34
35 *Sander moved to approve the 11/20/23 Warrants as presented. Furr seconded.*

36 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*
37

38 **Purchase Orders:** None
39

40 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**
41

42 **Update on Gateway sewer expansion, including an update from the Richmond Land**
43 **Trust**

44 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2023/1/4a_RLT_letter_to_RWSC_re_Willis_Hill_Easement_11-6-23.pdf
45

46
47 Wolaver: Last week we received a letter from the Richmond Land Trust on the easement
48 between the school and the Willis Farm property.
49

50 Hill: This is a continuation from that agenda item in our last meeting with the intent of
51 both notifying property owners in the Gateway that the letter existed and inviting people
52 to comment on it tonight.

53
54 Furr: A letter from Linda Parent stated that the project will make it necessary for all
55 users to pay the price and the extension to a private development, the Reaps. She stated
56 her belief that if a developer wishes to extend the system, they are responsible for the
57 cost. She stated that the lines will be 6-inches, which will not be big enough. She stated
58 it seems to put undue burden on the landowners when the Gateway takes the 30-foot
59 right-of-way for both of water/sewer lines and requiring them to allow the green belt and
60 walking biking path.

61
62 DeGraaf, N: The Verburg Farm parcel is the homestead only including the three houses
63 on that road, it's all one system based on wells. The 6-inch line would not meet the needs
64 of us that far, let alone everybody else that is attached to that line. The 30-foot easement
65 for the sewer and water line is fine but I do not encroach the green beltway as part of it is not
66 the scope of the reason of that right away. It's kind of like getting blackmailed into the
67 water. You're talking about the huge value of loss of income to the farm because of that
68 green beltway.

69
70 Bormann, H: The Mobile Station has no intention of doing water and sewer because they
71 are already in the process with the State. The other one was the mobile home park, a few
72 years ago, he had no intentions of expanding. You're talking between \$30 to \$50,000 per
73 homeowner with engineering fees for construction. You do need to hook on it if it is
74 constructed.

75
76 Furr: The last time we did an expansion, we were generous with how many years you
77 had to hook on. We realized originally, there was no way people could afford it.

78
79 Bormann, H: It is up to a developer to pay for this on their own. When I read this, hardly
80 anyone is going to hit this other than the developer in Phase One, which is the Reaps.

81
82 Cote: It's my understanding the Town needs to take over the pipeline through their
83 property after the Reaps basically put it in. We all had a lot of questions last week about
84 pipe size. Once we get engineering involved, there would be some specifics in the Land
85 Trust letter changed.

86
87 Bressor: I'm here on behalf of the Land Trust to answer questions and to also clarify a
88 couple of points. I think the 6-inch was put in there because that was the largest number,
89 we had heard for a sewer pipe, but we're not tied to any pipe size.

90
91 Farr: We thought it needed to be an 8-inch line for water in order to support fire.

92
93 Sander: The letter says the sewer and water lines will have a maximum diameter of 6-
94 inch which was a red flag because we had assumed that for hydrants, we would need an
95 8-inch.

96
97 Bressor: The water and sewer line as we envisioned in that letter would all be on the
98 Reap side of the road down through the Gateway, it wouldn't have any effect on the farm

99 across the road. The letter talked about whether it will be available for the Verburg
100 homestead, all that elevated area, the residences, farm, and everything.

101
102 Hill: The cost of achieving 5-foot shoulder widths between the Mobile Station and the
103 Village was \$5-\$6 million. If there were such a path, how could it feasibly connect to the
104 Village. Similar to the water/sewer line discussion, what about running a path up through
105 the Conserved land to connect the school to the Gateway? That seems to be the only
106 economically feasible way of connecting to the path.

107
108 Bressor: The last we heard from the school is that they don't want public access during
109 school hours. This letter is focused on the core of the length of the path that runs from
110 the beginning of the Reap farm to the Crate Escape. It would bypass some of those pinch
111 point areas and use the setback area and zoning of those areas. It would be a path
112 through that 30-foot area, water on one side, sewer on the other, with the advantage of
113 installation costs would be way less because you wouldn't be digging in the Rt 2 right-of-
114 way. There's nothing in our letter that suggests we're asking people to give an easement
115 on the land. The creation of this 30-foot lineal parkway is a good use of Conservation
116 funds, which would go to the owners to buy down what they would have to pay to tie into
117 that line. Our letter is not intending to push water and sewer to the Mobile Station or the
118 mobile home park.

119
120 Farr: If the Reaps don't have something to show us what they want to do, it seems like
121 we're putting the cart before the horse to amend the easement without knowing their
122 intentions. The path is definitely a factor, and it seems like if that keeps moving forward,
123 we need to keep talking about it.

124
125 Perren: I have a duplex. My neighbor and I have a plan to build some housing if we
126 could ever get water and sewer. Do you take that 30 feet and then the setback to build is
127 another 25 feet of land that we can't use.

128
129 Hill: The Water Sewer Commission doesn't have authority to negotiate pathways, our
130 role is really simple and straightforward about the water/sewer. I know from the Reaps
131 this week that they will submit plans for storage units on the back part of their property in
132 the near term. In the medium term, they intend housing on the front end. What would
133 they build with on-site water and sewer? What would they build with public water and
134 sewer coming down the hill? The current easement allows for water and sewer going to
135 phase one without restriction. If they're interested, we could put water and sewer lines to
136 serve Phase One that would be installed at a scale that could serve additional properties
137 further down the road. We have the legal authority under the current easement to build
138 those water and sewer lines, including a fire hydrant which helps the fire department and
139 has the potential of impacting property insurance costs in the Gateway. We have in play
140 for Town money of \$147,000 of Northern Regional Borders Commission grant funds to
141 extend water/sewer to the Reap property. For the Reaps, can you make this work for your
142 property, and you do the rest under the current easement? We could take it over as a
143 public line once it's built and any discussions of extension beyond the Reaps would take
144 place on another day in a Phase Two or Three conversation.

145

146 Bressor: The 30-foot is the Gateway setback zonings. You'd want the water/sewer lines
147 far enough out that you could maintain the lines without destroying the path. What our
148 excavator needs to dig without destroying the path is pretty much up to 30-feet.

149
150 Wolaver: The grant would not be triggered until we know that it is a public line.

151
152 Sander: Part of the confusion on the past paragraph h. If I were a landowner granting
153 use of a path to be owned by the town of Richmond, I would take that to mean that we
154 don't own it.

155
156 Bressor: The Town would own the actual path, not the land under it.

157
158 Hill: There is a possible path forward through Phase One, then it's engineered to support
159 extensions further, a different conversation in terms of what would it take for an extended
160 easement and financial support. We're sort of painted into a corner as the current users
161 don't want to pay for it and our ordinance says an extension has to be paid for by the
162 people who will be served by the extension. Do we want to do the next phase of
163 inspection of the school line, because the last test is at best inconclusive. Does the Water
164 Sewer Commission want to spend another couple of \$1,000 to see if that line is credible
165 enough to connect?

166
167 Cote: I could not envision us taking on a line that we have no legitimate proof that it is in
168 good shape.

169
170 Wolaver: Tet's bring this up to the next meeting because there is the health of the line on
171 the school and there is the easement as well to connect to the end of those lines.

172
173 Hill: It is our attorney's opinion that the Town can be assigned by the Reaps under the
174 current easement, which would suggest that we could partner and take over the line
175 without an additional easement. An extension past that would require something else.

176
177 **Update on fluoride pump**

178
179 Cote: The dosing pump is not working properly, and the State is supposed to be getting
180 us one. The dosing pump continues to bleed. As soon as I leave for the day or go home
181 at night, I then disconnect the fluoride to stop it from overdosing during the night. I'm
182 monitoring the fluoride levels at the pump house, at the water treatment plant, and up at
183 the tank. When we send a sample to the State, it tends to come back at a lower level than
184 what our colorimeter is showing the State. The State wants us to go on to a weekly
185 testing instead of a monthly testing. We are getting a new pump and colorimeter. When
186 you get November's water numbers, you will see a fluctuation in fluoride.

187
188 Sander: We have everything from the State in writing.

189
190 Cote: Yes.

191
192 **Update on Tilden Ave., Bridge St, Cochran Rd. Waterline Replacement Project**

193 TABLED

194

195 **Update on water tank mixer installation and inspection of water tank**

196

197 Cote: It's done, they took the video. They felt the tank was really good inside, looked
198 great. There are no obvious cracks that can physically be seen in there. The new mixer
199 was installed and it's all up and running.

200

201 Arneson: Once we get the video, Tyler, the engineer, will review the video and provide a
202 more formal reply to the Commission. He also notes that the exterior does not look as
203 good as he'd like it to look.

204

205 Cote: When you put 750,000 gallons of water in a tank on top of the compacted soil, a
206 quarter inch of settlement over 10 years is going to cause stress on the concrete. The
207 pillars inside the tank did not appear to have any cracks in them, structurally they looked
208 good.

209

210 **Review of list of water and wastewater items to be repaired or replaced**

211 TABLED

212 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2023/1/4e_Water_and_Wastewater_Items_to_be_Repaired_or_Replaced_11-17-23.pdf

213

214

215 **Update on contracting for water meters**

216

217 Arneson: We have an agreement. I just have to sign it and send it over to Zenner. We
218 should be good moving on to get installation going.

219

220 **Consideration of changing the date of the second Water and Sewer Commission**
221 **meeting in January due to the MLK Day holiday on the third Monday of January**

222

223 *Furr moved to change the date for the second Water and Sewer Commission meeting in*
224 *January to Tuesday, January 16, 2023 in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on*
225 *the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting date of Monday, January 15, 2023. Farr*
226 *seconded.*

227

228 *Sander amended motion to change the date for the second Water and Sewer Commission*
229 *meeting in January to Tuesday, January 16, 2024 in recognition of Martin Luther King*
230 *Jr. Day on the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting date of Monday, January 15,*
231 *2024. Farr seconded.*

232

Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.

233

234 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

235

*TABLED items

236

*Gateway expansion

237

*Timeline for water meters

238

239 **Adjournment**

240

241 *Furr moved to adjourn. Sander seconded.*

242

Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.

243

244 Meeting adjourned at: 6:56 PM

245

246 **Chat file from Zoom:** None

247