

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission**
3 **Minutes of January 2, 2024**
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5 **Members Present:** Bard Hill, David Sander, Erin Farr, Jay Furr, Morgan Wolaver

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7 **Members Absent:** None

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

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12 **Others Present:** The meeting was recorded for MMCTV

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14 **MMCTV Video:**

15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ql0v4fY6ryU&list=PLm9TgJr7n7xfcKxRghWWSdATHBzGQTgkK&index=2>

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17 **Call to Order: 6:00 pm**

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19 **Welcome:** Wolaver

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21 **Public Comment:**

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23 Wolaver: Thank you to Steve, Josh and crew for keeping the water and sewer going for
24 2023.

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26 Sander: Two 100-year floods in five months. Had we not moved the waterline up on the
27 bridge, we would have been in dire straits.

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29 **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:** None

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31 **Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**

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33 **Minutes:**

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35 *Sander moved to approve the Minutes of 12/18/23 meeting as presented. Farr seconded.*
36 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*

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38 **Warrants:**

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40 *Furr moved to approve the 1/2/24 Warrants as presented. Sander seconded.*
41 *Roll Call Vote follows discussion.*

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43 Hill: FEMA doesn't have one set of policies for all the different entities that are eligible
44 from private commercial business and public entities including towns, counties, states. I
45 suspect they are not the same across the different FEMA financial programs.

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

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49 **Purchase Orders:** None

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Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Update on repairs to damages caused by flooding

Cote: The biggest problem because of the flooding was a tree came down, hit the side of the bridge, wedged itself onto our force main for sewer line which was crushed and broke the brackets that was holding it up. At 19 F degrees, it will freeze causing P&P to truck septage from that side of the bridge. It is going to be substantially expensive to fix it. One of the problems that we have with a girder bridge is they can't just use a boom truck to reach out and go under. The scaffolding alone is in the \$24,000 range. This was the first time that we actually physically saw a tree wedged into the bridge and the pipe. The waterline is almost 3 feet higher than the sewer line.

Hill: I think it was put there in the first place because there was an historical understanding that the objects floating in the water would never hit that high or might do it once in 100 years. What made sense 10 or 30 or 50 years ago, probably doesn't make sense anymore.

Cote: Part of the upgrade engineering study is the collection system, and this is part of the collection system, and I made them aware of it on Tuesday morning. Without doing a whole engineering study, we could not do any more than really get it back to what it was. It's a foam type of insulation that is wrapped with corrugated metal. There's been several people that have asked why we don't directionally bore but if you look at Burlington, they had a line under the Winooski that ruptured in July. It's already a 6-inch which for a force main is pretty big and it would mean if we went to that route, it would also mean enlarging the size of our pump station.

Arneson: I reached out to insurance they said it wasn't on our property schedule and even if it was it is out in the open which is only covered for specific causes but not flood. The Wastewater Collection System reserve has \$102,000 but we're paying \$24,000 for scaffolding.

Cote: There's probably double the amount of hangers that are on the water pipe as what the sewer pipe has and they're completely different design. The Sunday before Christmas when it was 19 degrees, the line froze but it's got about a 2-foot sag in it with no insulation and about 3-inches wide where the tree crushed it. On Monday, we put 1,173,000 gallons through the plant basically 12 times the daily amount, we're going to violate our permit in December and the State's aware of it. By Tuesday at 4 pm, the plant was running back to normal.

Hill: We have a large number of stormwater infiltration points, and we should start looking at the high volume before we go to the low volume sources of infiltration. It's not only households that are contributing but other parts of the system.

Cote: One of the biggest ways to ensure that we don't have infiltration is to seal the manholes that are in the flood zone, 12-15 sealed manhole in those areas. We've got to talk with the engineers and verify that the collection system in that area can withstand the added pressure of the volume that might be coming down because we don't want to have

99 a pipe rupture. Most of the pipes in Volunteers Green were lined so they should be in
100 really good shape, it's just a matter of changing the manhole covers on Esplanade, a
101 couple on Church Street, and a couple on the other side of the river.
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103 Wolaver: Maybe we look at starting close to the river first because I would imagine
104 that's an extensive review.
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106 Cote: The engineers can look and assess if there's any places that the collection system
107 might need to be addressed. The water was moving at a lot faster pace this time. We
108 didn't see any silt in the filters. We had some inundation into the well into the pump
109 house. It did not go over the wellhead this time. It did go into the clear well, I want to
110 seal the clear well from getting inundated the way it did it. There shouldn't be any way
111 for silt to get into the tank but when we opened the cover on the tank which stands up
112 about 18 inches off of the floor, it looked like a mud pie. We pumped it out, circulated
113 water from the well, pumped it back out, flushed it until it was clear, shock treated it with
114 chlorine, the State required a back bacteria test and we got approval to turn it right back
115 on. This time it did not go over the wellhead, but we did take the precaution of shutting
116 the well off on Monday night.
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118 **Review of list of water and wastewater items to be repaired or replaced, including**
119 **status of new fluoride pump**

120 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2023/1](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2023/12/4b_Water_and_Wastewater_Items_to_be_Repaired_or_Replaced_12-29-23.pdf)
121 [2/4b Water and Wastewater Items to be Repaired or Replaced 12-29-23.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2023/12/4b_Water_and_Wastewater_Items_to_be_Repaired_or_Replaced_12-29-23.pdf)
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123 Cote: We did receive our new fluoride pump that's been installed and after spending the
124 better week of tweaking, it was at ~0.70. We have two clarifiers at the wastewater
125 treatment plant and one of them has a malfunction in it, we switched to the one that we
126 had in reserve.
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128 **Discussion of improvements for flood resiliency**
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130 Cote: My biggest fear is that we have a problem with the pump station. The pump
131 station went into alarm on Monday night about 11 pm, I had P&P come and it stayed in
132 alarm till Tuesday morning. How many more times can we take the chance on the pump
133 station, the collection, the line across the bridge, the manholes, the water house ceiling
134 from being inundated. I think we need to be preventative by sealing it and keeping the
135 water out of the system, it also lowers the amount that we have to force through the plant.
136 We need to make sure that we're not creating a bigger problem by holding all that volume
137 of water back. We can work with the engineers that did a complete assessment of our
138 collection system before. On January 8th, I am meeting with Efficiency Vermont
139 engineers and asked to meet with Jeff Forward to find out what we can do to make all of
140 the upgrade as efficient as we can.
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142 **Update on water meters**
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144 Cote: The service line inventory going forward, the EPA will allow a certain number of
145 connections that might have been led in the past. You're going to be required to change a
146 certain number of those every year until you get to the zero mark.
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148 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

149 *Review of 60% report

150 *Water numbers

151 *To-do list

152 *Update on bridge sewer line repair

153 *Update on water meters

154 *Updated on service line inventory

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156 **Adjournment**

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158 *Farr moved to adjourn. Sander seconded.*

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

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161 Meeting adjourned at: 6:53 pm

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163 **Chat file from Zoom:** None

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