

1 **Town of Richmond**  
2 **Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission**  
3 **Minutes of March 18, 2024**  
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, Rod West  
13

14 **MMCTV Video:** <https://youtu.be/vTsGPajeaJ8?si=nOejDqEBI8eUYhVR>  
15

16 **Call to Order: 5:00 pm**  
17

18 **Welcome:** Wolaver  
19

20 **Public Comment:** None  
21

22 **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:** None  
23

24 **Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**  
25

26 **Minutes:**  
27

28 *Furr moved to approve the Minutes of 3/4/24 meeting as presented. Sander seconded.*  
29 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*  
30

31 **Purchase Orders:**  
32

33 *Furr moved to approve PO# 4774 to Vendors Used for Service Line Break at WWTP for*  
34 *Service Link to RWWP for not to exceed \$15,390.16. Sander seconded.*  
35 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*  
36

37 *Furr moved to approve PO# 4865 to M&T Bank/Wilmington Trust for East Main*  
38 *Planning for not to exceed \$12,021.12. Sander seconded.*  
39 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*  
40

41 **Warrants:**  
42

43 *Furr moved to approve the 3/18/24 Warrants as presented. Farr seconded.*  
44 *Roll Call Vote: Farr, Furr, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*  
45

46 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**  
47

48 **Review of DRAFT FY25 Budget**

49 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4a\\_FY25\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_Draft\\_1\\_03-11-24.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4a_FY25_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_1_03-11-24.pdf)

51

52 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4a\\_FY25\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_Draft\\_1\\_03-15-24.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4a_FY25_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_1_03-15-24.xlsx)

54

55 Arneson: I can go through and give a general overview of some of the changes. We  
56 need to have the total water and sewer usage at the end of this month to calculate the  
57 rates, but I did create a draft that kept the water usage the same as the previous year. The  
58 pay grade is budgeted to increase by 3%, which is the same budget that we use for the  
59 Selectboard and general staff. Health insurance is set to increase for current use for all  
60 employees. We increased the interest revenue based on seeing higher interest rates with a  
61 \$11,000 projection.

62

63 We did increase in Water Capital Reserve and added \$10,000 anticipating that we're  
64 going to need to put some money into the alarm as well as a new car/truck in the next  
65 couple of years. Water capital FY24 contributions budgeted for Short Term \$20,000,  
66 almost \$30,000 for Water Capital, and the projected balance of Distribution of \$41,000.  
67 The Selectboard made a policy that they want to keep on Unrestricting funds at 15%. the  
68 Water Operating budget is \$396,000 or just under \$60,000.

69

70 The way we calculate the sewer receipts is to total up the non-user revenue and subtract  
71 that from the total budget. That takes us from about \$290,000 to \$352,000 in getting  
72 revenue from the sewer users, or about a 21% increase.

73

74 Cote: In general, everybody comes in and says they just don't have work or our rate is  
75 the same as Milton which is closer.

76

77 Hill: I'm inclined to go back to our early history where we were cautious about septage  
78 receipts and not relying on it as a core revenue for infrastructure. It would be useful to be  
79 see how the receipts and the user rates covariate over time.

80

81 Cote: 2019 to 2021 were big years for septage because Richmond was one of the only  
82 facilities taking during COVID. I'm pretty confident that we bill on the higher side than  
83 we take in.

84

85 Wolaver: But we still haven't determined a rate that properly compensates us for cost.

86

87 Arneson: For the next meeting, we can take a better look at what we actually have to  
88 address before the 20-year. The only other thing that may be noted on the money side is  
89 we now have flatline contributions to Wastewater Capital, Short-term capital, and  
90 Collection System Capital funds.

91

92 Furr: The big question is how much money we can take from Unrestricted to reduce rates  
93 because we don't know how much things are going to cost.

94

95 Hill: I don't think we should make a judgement about rates next year without being  
96 thoughtful about what expenses we're facing.

97

98 Cote: The discussion with Zenner confirmed that some of our meters are probably 25%  
99 off. This is a reason why Champlain Water District and other towns change their water  
100 meters every 25 years.

101

102 Arneson: There were still a few numbers that we are working on in the next week and a  
103 have to update.

104

105 **Consideration of setting a date and location for the Water and Sewer Annual**  
106 **Meeting**

107

108 *Sander moved to hold the Water and Sewer Annual Meeting on Tuesday May 21, 2024 at*  
109 *6pm at the Town Center. Farr seconded.*

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

111

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

113

114 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2024/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4c_Water_and_Wastewater_Items_to_be_Repaired_or_Replaced_3-15-24.pdf)  
115 [3/4c\\_Water\\_and\\_Wastewater\\_Items\\_to\\_be\\_Repaired\\_or\\_Replaced\\_3-15-24.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4c_Water_and_Wastewater_Items_to_be_Repaired_or_Replaced_3-15-24.pdf)

116

117 Cote: We're just flying along right now and I'm beginning to think we might want to take  
118 on a fourth employee. We started up on Tilden doing our curb stop search and we  
119 located six curb stops with three of them you could not get a wrench on to turn. We're  
120 producing a very quick list of ones that need to be changed. The Fournier parts that came  
121 in on Friday were damaged, but they have already sent the replacement parts. The press  
122 is supposed to be up and running again by Thursday, and we will be able to take as much  
123 septage as we can. Our contract operator says this plant produces some of the cleanest  
124 effluent despite all of its problems. We had a meeting with the Zenner rep and finalized  
125 all of the meters. Some of the installs we're going to handle in house and the other  
126 installs were subbing out. The March data will show two pHs because we continued to  
127 monitor it for about two weeks with the old system until we were comfortable switching  
128 it.

129

130 **Update on Gateway project**

131

132 Wolaver: We need to set up a meeting with the school.

133

134 Hill: There's some evidence that the school giving something to the Town like an  
135 easement might potentially be a big deal in terms of process. It came up again that  
136 people ask about why we don't use ARPA funds to pay to put water and sewer lines down  
137 to the Gateway.

138

139 Arneson: I had a meeting with NBRC regarding the status of the grant and they can  
140 continue to give extensions, but they have to go back to the federal grantors to get those  
141 approved.

142

143 Hill: There's at least one property owner that has gone on record saying they don't want it  
144 and there are multiple property owners who say they do want it.

145

146 West: I would still like to make the case to use left-over ARPA money to get the fire  
147 water and pump station down onto the Reaps and then any additional users could be  
148 responsible for running their own lines to that pump station.

149

150 Hill: The other wrinkle is the expansion of the Water Sewer District.

151

### 152 **Update on change to Water Supply Rule**

153

154 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2024/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4e_Water_Supply_Rule_Update_-_March_2024.pdf)  
155 [3/4e Water Supply Rule Update - March 2024.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4e_Water_Supply_Rule_Update_-_March_2024.pdf)

156

157 Cote: The Water Supply Rule still had a listing of 1.0 to 1.6 ppm as the amount of  
158 fluoride you would have in a system, and the CDC recommendations were 0.6 to 1.0.  
159 The State had never updated their Water Supply Rule, so they sent this letter out stating  
160 that they had done that.

161

### 162 **Review of information sheet related to sewer meters**

163

164 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2024/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4f_Statement_on_Sewer_Meters_DRAFT_3-15-24.pdf)  
165 [3/4f Statement on Sewer Meters DRAFT 3-15-24.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2024/03/4f_Statement_on_Sewer_Meters_DRAFT_3-15-24.pdf)

166

167 Arneson: I put together a fairly short statement which basically says we set a metered  
168 and fixed rate.

169

170 Hill: Are we aware of any system anywhere that has both water and sewer meters on the  
171 same property? My understanding is nobody really does this.

172

173 Farr: Metering sewer is more challenging because there are solids which makes it more  
174 complicated.

175

176 Cote: It is a sewer rate based on water flow that is the wording that should have been  
177 used.

178

179 Arneson: We have a chance to do that at the annual meeting.

180

### 181 **Update on status of Tilden Ave. Bridge St. and Cochran Rd. waterline replacement** 182 **project**

183

184 Arneson: The State sent an email saying that they have received our application and  
185 they're asking for a few other follow ups. Getting into construction this summer is  
186 doubtful and this looks like a spring project for next year.

187

### 188 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

189

\*Budget

190

\*Update the letter on meters

191

\*Review the to-do list

192

\*School update

193

\*Water tank diver video

194

195 **Adjournment**

196

197 *Sander moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

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

199

200 Meeting adjourned at: 6:51 pm

201

202 **Chat file from Zoom:** None

203