

**Town of Richmond**  
**Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission**  
**Minutes of May 5, 2025**

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

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Superintendent Steve Cote; Deputy Superintendent Brad Snow; Town Manager Josh Arneson; Assistant to the Town Manager Duncan Wardwell; Admin Assistant Linn Caroleo; Finance Director Connie Bona.

**Others Present:** The meeting was recorded for MMCTV Erin Wagg, Tom Astle, Becky Vigneault.

**MMCTV Video:** MMCTV Erin Wagg  
<https://youtu.be/KAQXHpiOBdQ?si=SvFklhdpckIaAgFr>

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

**Welcome:** Wolaver

**Public Comment:** Erin Farr's birthday, everyone sang!!!

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

**Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders**  
Timestamp: 0:01

**Minutes:** Approval not completed.

**Purchase Orders:** None

**Warrants:**

*Furr moved to approve the Warrants as presented. Hill seconded.  
Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*

**Consideration of approving a letter to the State regarding the review process for the Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. waterline project**  
Timestamp: 0:02

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a\\_Letter\\_to\\_Agency\\_of\\_Natural\\_Resources\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a_Letter_to_Agency_of_Natural_Resources_FINAL.pdf)

People who participated in discussion: Hill, Furr, Wolaver

Furr and Hill agreed the letter laid out the issue well with an excellent timeline and should be sent.

*Furr moved to approve the letter to be sent to the Water Investment Division regarding the review process for the Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. waterline project. Sander seconded.*

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

## **Review of Third Quarter FY25 Financials**

Timestamp: 0:04

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4b1\\_FY25\\_QTR\\_3\\_Budget\\_Status\\_Water\\_and\\_Wastewater.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4b1_FY25_QTR_3_Budget_Status_Water_and_Wastewater.pdf)

[https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater\\_Sewer\\_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4b2\\_FY25\\_QTR\\_3\\_Budget\\_Status\\_Water\\_and\\_Wastewater.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4b2_FY25_QTR_3_Budget_Status_Water_and_Wastewater.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4b3\\_FY25\\_QTR\\_3\\_Water\\_Sewer\\_Septage\\_Financials.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4b3_FY25_QTR_3_Water_Sewer_Septage_Financials.pdf)

[https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater\\_Sewer\\_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4b4\\_Debt\\_Schedule.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4b4_Debt_Schedule.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

People who participated in discussion: Arneson, Cote, Hill, Farr

Arneson explained the cash balance remains at \$1.3 million and is very stable. Water revenue is behind where it was this time last year, but Wastewater is ahead and trending toward a \$500k year. Reserve accounts are down a bit due to larger purchases for repairs this year. Cote explained that the plant does not use significant amounts of water. And he is finding water leaks daily, because of the new water meters, he is amazed at how much water “is just going down the drain.” Hill pointed out that less than 30% of sales comes from water. Cote said Richmond is one of three places that sell water in the winter. Septage is 67% of the budget. A gap loan will be paid in full so that will save us \$30,000 next year Arneson stated. Cote said they have found 10 toilets or more that just run.

## **Review of Draft FY26 Budget and Rates**

Timestamp: 0:20

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c1\\_FY26\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_Draft\\_05-05-25.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c1_FY26_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_05-05-25.pdf)

[https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater\\_Sewer\\_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4c2\\_FY26\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_Draft\\_05-05-25.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4c2_FY26_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_05-05-25.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c3\\_FY26\\_Water\\_and\\_Wastewater\\_DRAFT\\_Rates\\_5-5-25.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c3_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_5-5-25.pdf)

[https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater\\_Sewer\\_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4c4\\_FY26\\_Water\\_and\\_Wastewater\\_DRAFT\\_Rates\\_5-5-25.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4c4_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_5-5-25.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c5\\_WS\\_Rate\\_and\\_Budget\\_Charts.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4c5_WS_Rate_and_Budget_Charts.pdf)

People who participated in discussion: Arneson, Cote, Hill, Furr, Wolaver, Farr

Arneson said Bona found an amortization that wasn't added to the budget. He continued that rates have been calculated using the current usage numbers. There has been a large drop in water usage which will affect the rates considerably. Furr pointed out that people will react to reduced water usage but still getting charged more. Farr suggested changing commercial usage rates. Hill suggested that in the Commercial and Government group there is likely a large user and a low user, perhaps the high user group should be charged more? Cote said the Brewery and the Dentist are the biggest Commercial users in Town, similarly the two restaurants that just closed are not included in the budget any longer (Hatchet and Big Spruce). Arneson said all these changes will affect the rates, last year the residential rates went down 11% and this year it will go up 25%. Farr asked if the restaurants are still paying the fixed rate, which they are due to residential apartments above. She added that Residential fixed rate is lower than Commercial. Hill wondered if we should adjust our usage rates based on these restaurant closures. Cote said a customer presently has a 60 gallon per hour leak and they "don't seem to care". Wolaver pointed out that the fixed rate is precarious. Arneson said it's hard to predict future usage. Cote stated that people use more water in the summer for watering yards and outside usage. He added that a significant reduction in usage was getting the plant running more efficiently. Farr asked about the water usage at the schools, to which Cote replied that changing the meters at the schools has not reduced the water usage.

## **Review of 2024 Consumer Confidence Report**

Timestamp: 0:43

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4d1\\_email\\_with\\_explanation\\_of\\_lead\\_testing.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4d1_email_with_explanation_of_lead_testing.pdf)

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4d2\\_CCR\\_2024\\_for\\_mailing.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4d2_CCR_2024_for_mailing.pdf)

People who participated in the discussion: Snow, Cote, Arneson, Wolaver, Farr, Sander

Snow reported that he has been emailing back and forth with the State and is prepared to answer questions. Wolaver asked about maximum contaminant levels, MCLs vs MCL goals, which is 90% of the MCL. Snow explained that for lead and copper the MCL is zero, but the MCL goal is 0 to 0.38 parts per billion. AL is an allowable level, which is listed as 15 parts per billion. Arneson said that because of certain older service lines you will realistically never get to zero unless you replace the entire system. Cote said there is a difference between what the Health Department says and what A&R says. Snow submitted 13 samples yet only 10 were required. Cote added if the test shows lead it means there could be galvanized pipe or lead soldering in that house's pipes. He continued to explain that they diligently sampled houses that may have lead or copper in the pipes. Farr said she feels a lot better after this conversation. Sander said the lead that is showing up is from a specific home, not from the system. In general we have safe water, Cote replied.

#### **Review of monthly water data for April**

Timestamp: 0:51

[https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4e\\_Monthly\\_Water\\_Report\\_for\\_April\\_2025.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4e_Monthly_Water_Report_for_April_2025.pdf)

People who participated in the discussion: Wolaver, Cote

The numbers from April's water data look surprisingly good, Wolaver stated. Cote said yes, much better.

#### **Update on Water Meter installation**

Timestamp: 0:51

People who participated in the discussion: Cote, Sander

Cote explained there are only 4 large water meters left to install, for which they need plumbers. And there are two outstanding meters left to install in the same residential home, but he has had no contact whatsoever with those residents. Sander suggested sending an officer for a wellness check.

#### **Superintendents Report**

Timestamp: 0:53

People who participated in discussion: Cote, Snow

193 Cote explained they have a broken press again. The conveyer they ordered the parts for  
194 finally snapped, and he is now waiting for the parts to come. Snow said they are going to  
195 try and weld the old one back together.  
196 The phosphorus removal is nearly 99.8%, which is unheard of. They recently attended a  
197 six hour microbiology class held by a woman who used to run Detroit's 1.8 billion sewer  
198 plant. She talked about how to keep the microorganisms alive. They really enjoyed the  
199 class.

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202 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

203 Water meter update  
204 Budget  
205 Preparatory discussion for the annual meeting

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207 **Adjournment**

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209 *Furr moved to adjourn. Sander seconded.*

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

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213 **Meeting adjourned at: 6:56 pm**

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216 **Chat file from Zoom:** None.

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