

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of May 19, 2025

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

Members Absent: Morgan Wolaver

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

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

MMCTV Video: MMCTV Erin Wagg
<https://youtu.be/rlg0tlviZZA?si=Q-IrHbw4BWkZM3IN>

Call to Order: 6:00 pm

Welcome: Farr

Public Comment: None

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None

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

Minutes:

Hill moved to approve the minutes of April 17, 2025. Furr seconded.

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

Hill moved to approve the minutes of May 5, 2025. Furr seconded.

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

Purchase Orders:

Hill moved to amend Purchase Order number 4754 to Champlin Associates for the water system monitoring system to an amount of \$15,741.72. Furr seconded.

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

Warrants:

Hill moved to approve the Warrants as presented. Furr seconded.

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

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

52 Timestamp: 0:04

54 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a1_FY26_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_05-19-25_pdf.pdf

57 https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4a2_FY26_Water_Wastewater_budget_Draft_05-19-25_excel.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

62 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a3_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_98_percent_5-19-25_pdf.pdf

65 https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4a4_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_98_percent_5-19-25_excel.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

70 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a5_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_95_percent_5-19-25_pdf.pdf

73 https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FWater_Sewer_Commission%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F05%2F4a6_FY26_Water_and_Wastewater_DRAFT_Rates_95_percent_5-19-25_excel.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

78 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4a7_WS_Rate_and_Budget_Charts_5-19-25.pdf

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

84 Arneson described the changes he has made to the budget to reflect the user rates going
85 from 98% to 95%. This makes a \$0.50 rate increase. Furr described that because two
86 restaurants in Town are closed usage rates should be down. Cote said he has found
87 another leak using the new water meter system. Hill wanted to know the impact on
88 Residential accounts if the 95% option was chosen, which Arneson said would become
89 about a 3% rise in rates. All board members present feel the 95% is prudent.

92 **Review of agenda for Annual Meeting**

93 Timestamp: 0:15

95 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/05/4b_Water_and_Sewer_Commission_Annual_Meeting_Agenda_6-3-25.pdf

97
98
99 People who participated in discussion: Arneson, Cote, Hill, Farr
100
101 Arneson presented the draft Agenda that he is proposing for the Annual meeting. Cote
102 and all board members encouraged including a discussion about the Confidence report,
103 which was not on the draft Agenda. A brief discussion ensued about the order of items on
104 the Agenda.
105
106
107 **Consideration of setting the rate of increase for the pay grid**
108 Timestamp: 0:20
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110
111 People who participated in discussion: Arneson
112
113 Arneson said there exists a pay grid for the Water and Sewer Department employees. He
114 uses the national consumer report to calculate the annual raise, which this year is 3%
115 which was built into the next fiscal year's budget.
116
117
118 *Hill moved to increase the Water and Sewer pay grid by 3.0% for Fiscal Year 2026. Furr*
119 *seconded.*
120 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Sander, Farr in favor. Motion approved*
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122
123 **Update on Tilden Ave Waterline Replacement Project**
124 Timestamp: 0:22
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126
127 People who participated in the discussion: Arneson, Farr, Cote
128
129 Arneson explained that one approval came in last week, which was a positive step
130 forward. This now must go out to bid. Farr wondered if it should go out for bid now or
131 wait until fall. Cote said not to wait until fall, because the weather is so unpredictable.
132 Arneson will bring this back to the next meeting.
133
134
135 **Superintendents Report**
136 Timestamp: 0:25
137
138 People who participated in the discussion: Cote
139
140 Cote explained there are 6 water meters left to install, the last installs have been tricky,
141 but they continue to work on it. The new water meters are working well, and he is finding
142 leaks frequently and people are responding well.
143 Cote reported that we have absolutely no PFAS in our biosolids, which is good news.
144 Bids are in for the influent pump that needs to be replaced, so that is progressing.

145 He wants to start testing pH and chlorine in the water coming into the plant automatically
146 and then put the chlorine on a dosing system which adds chlorine automatically when the
147 analyzer gets below 0.8. To add a test for pH is about \$1000 he was quoted. In the future
148 he is hoping to do the same with fluoride.
149 The screw that broke two weeks ago, they were able to replace it the following Thursday,
150 and they didn't have to shut down and they kept taking septage. The new screw is
151 working well. He got help from Gosselin and the Highway department to install the
152 screw with the bucket loader.
153 Snow and Cote went to Fairlee last week and made some good connections. The plant is
154 running well, and Snow is taking his test again and is studying hard to get his license.
155 Mike is working on getting his water license.
156
157
158 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**
159 Waterline bid
160 Tilden Ave
161 Hoyt Tanner to discuss upgrade project
162 20-year study
163 Goals for next year
164 Community outreach ideas
165
166 **Adjournment**
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168 *Hill moved to adjourn. Furr seconded.*
169 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Farr, Furr, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*
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172 **Meeting adjourned at: 6:48 pm**
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175 **Chat file from Zoom: None.**
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