

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of December 1, 2025

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Town Manager Josh Arneson; Duncan Wardwell, Deputy Town Manager; Steve Cote, Water Resources Superintendent

Others Present: The meeting was recorded for MMCTV Erin Wagg, Andrew Mannix, Mairead O'Reilly, Mary Houle, Virginia Clarke

MMCTV Video: <https://youtu.be/-VJ-7Dc2TYI?si=TSiT17b7yIA6LChD>

Call to Order: 6:00 pm

Welcome: Wolaver

Public Comment: Sander stated that SD Ireland's cement mixer went by and Wolaver commented it is a nice way to kick off the Christmas advent.

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Minutes:

Sander moved to approve the minutes of November 17, 2025. Farr seconded.

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

Purchase Orders: None

Warrants:

Sander moved to approve the Warrants as presented. Farr seconded.

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

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Update on Commission membership

Timestamp: 0:02

Arneson reviewed that Furr resigned and the Selectboard plans to appoint a replacement on December 15. A new Water Commissioner will be appointed for the first meeting in

January.

Arneson reviewed the dates to fill the vacancy for the Selectboard:

-Wed, December 10, letters of interest are due to the Town Manager

-December 11, letters of interest will be posted on website

-December 15, Selectboard meeting reviews letters and makes an appointment

Update on easement obtainment for the Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. Waterline Replacement Project

Timestamp: 0:04

Arneson stated they still need 6 of the 22 easements. Cote confirmed everybody has been mailed an easement with a letter and hand delivered some. Wolaver stated that they could leave nice phone messages.

Discussion with housing committee regarding expansion of water and wastewater into the Gateway

Timestamp: 0:11

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4c1_GatewayMaps2pgs.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4c2_Phases_I_and_II_Grand_List_Summary_v_3-2-22_with_payback_scenarios_for_2025_meeting.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4c3_Estimated_Private_Costs_To_Connect_to_Public_System_2.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4c4_1992_Allocation_Ordinance.pdf

Arneson reviewed that this came out of a Selectboard meeting with the Housing Committee. Arneson summarized that the Water Sewer Commission spent 5-6 years of varying intensity to discover the prohibitive cost of the project, about \$2.4 million to expand water and wastewater to the Mobile Station. Arneson illustrated the parcel payment options. Hill reviewed the ordinance requires new users to pay for it. Hill stated they never found a CHIP (<https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/vepc/chip>) or TIF (<https://accd.vermont.gov/src/economic-development/vepc/tif>) partner to help pay for it. Hill stated that it was not a popular idea for all the taxpayers to pay for it. Residential customers have significantly lower income than the Town as a whole. Cote observed that the problem with the Gateway is you cannot develop on one side of the road. Hill and Arneson reviewed that people are obligated to connect to the line if it is expanded or about \$8,000-\$10,000 per user.

Clarke stated that the Housing Committee needs some basic understanding of the issue in order to promote housing. Mannix asked about expansion on the other side of the river near Stone Corral and beyond. Mannix stated that Colchester uses a stormwater fee

based on impervious surfaces. Cote reviewed that the Water Sewer system has nothing to do with stormwater except making sure that it's not connected to wastewater. Hill observed that State and Federal funding sources serve low-income communities and Richmond is not a low-income community compared to the rest of the State or the user group. Hill stated that he is reaching out to the Regional Planning Commission for any new ideas. Hill reviewed that the bigger issue right now is not the extension but the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade.

Cote confirmed that he can provide information on the capacity of water and sewer and if the septage hauling portion is removed. The well currently produces ~60,000 gallons a day, the Town uses about 70,000 gallons a day and the tank is 750,000 gallons. They can go for almost 10 days without having to run the well on when they need to shut off the pump during a flood event. The Wastewater Treatment Plant operates at about 1/3 of capacity as it was designed for two cheese factories. Cote confirmed that the infrastructure of the Plant is in desperate need. They anticipate building a pump station that would be big enough for up to 600 units. Wolaver reviewed that would be within the current boundaries of the water sewer or built out on the Round Church side of the Town. Farr suggested getting the two Committees together to talk more about expansion other than the Gateway. Wolaver suggested scheduling some time for every third meeting. Sander reviewed that they have plenty of water and sewer, but the problems are aging infrastructure and the prohibitive costs of tying in.

Review of Fourth Quarter FY25 Financials

TABLED until next meeting

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4d1_FY25_QTR_4_Budget_Status_Water_Wastewater_excel.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4d2_FY25_QTR_4_Budget_Status_Water_Wastewater_pdf.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4d3_FY25_QTR_4_Water_Sewer_Septage_Financials.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4d4_FY25_QTR_4_Debt_Schedule.xlsx

Review of First Quarter FY26 Financials

TABLED until next meeting

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4e1_FY26_QTR_1_Budget_Status_Reports_excel.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4e2_FY26_QTR_1_Budget_Status_Reports_pdf.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/1/4e3_FY26_QTR_1_Water_Sewer_Septage_Financials.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2025/11/4e4_FY26_QTR_1_Debt_Schedule.xlsx

Superintendent's Report

Timestamp: 0:51

Cote stated that they were in violation of their discharge permit every day the week before Thanksgiving. The engineers did some investigating, and it coincided with the cold weather. They were putting in too much air in the aeration tank that created a drop in alkalinity and a drop in the pH. The pH was down to 6.10 but was back to 6.5 since Thanksgiving.

Cote stated that they are working diligently on getting the new influent pump installed. Hoyle Tanner felt some sandblasting and epoxy coating would address the rusting on the filter tanks.

Discuss Items for Next Agenda:

- Budgets
- Funding for the 20-year study upgrades
- 5 PM start on December 15

Adjournment

Farr moved to adjourn. Sander seconded.

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

Meeting adjourned at: 6:57 pm

Chat file from Zoom: None