

1 **Town of Richmond**  
2 **Special Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission**  
3 **Minutes of March 30, 2026**  
4

5 **Members Present:** Erin Farr, Bard Hill, Greg Rabideau, David Sander, Morgan Wolaver  
6

7 **Members Absent:** Greg Rabideau arrived at 6:02 PM  
8

9 **Staff Present:** Town Manager Josh Arneson; Duncan Wardwell, Deputy Town Manager;  
10 Steve Cote, Water Resources Superintendent  
11

12 **Others Present:** The meeting was recorded for MMCTV Erin Wagg, Maria Poley  
13

14 **MMCTV Video:** <https://youtu.be/MR0M5AI2ah0?si=XrtYx0uZKu7QOleq>  
15

16 **Call to Order:** 6:01 PM  
17

18 **Welcome:** Wolaver  
19

20 **Public Comment:** None  
21

22 **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda:**  
23

24 Farr stated that they should talk about the Housing Committee at the Water and Sewer  
25 Commission next week. Arneson suggested they discuss that at the end of the meeting  
26 when they “Discuss Items for Next Agenda.”  
27

28 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**  
29

30  
31 **Review and discussion of draft FY27 Water and Wastewater Budget**

32 Timestamp: 0:02

33 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3a1\\_FY27\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_03-26-26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3a1_FY27_Water_Wastewater_budget_03-26-26.pdf)  
34  
35

36 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3a2\\_FY27\\_Water\\_Wastewater\\_budget\\_03-26-26.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3a2_FY27_Water_Wastewater_budget_03-26-26.xlsx)  
37  
38

39 Arneson reviewed that this is the first pass of the budget and he will present Water,  
40 Wastewater, Restricted funds and Unrestricted funds. The Annual Meeting occurs on the  
41 third Tuesday in May where the Water and Sewer Commission votes and approves the  
42 budget. Water and Sewer customers are welcome to attend 3-4 different budget  
43 meetings. In order to create sample rates, the Commission looks at usage from April 1  
44 last year to March 31 this year.  
45

46 *Arneson presented items that affect both Water and Wastewater:*  
47

48 -Wages and benefits have been adjusted based on anticipated FY27 with the wage grid  
49 increasing by 3%. The projections also include an increase for Brad Snow obtaining his  
50 Grade 5 Wastewater license.  
51  
52 -Administrative Support from Town increased due to wages increasing in FY27.  
53  
54 -User Revenue is always based on the amount of operating expenses not covered by other  
55 sources of revenue.  
56  
57 ***Arneson presented notes regarding Water Expenses:***  
58  
59 -Uniforms increased from \$500 to \$750 due to prices increasing in general  
60  
61 -System Permits/Fees/Licenses decreased from \$1,900 to \$1,000  
62  
63 -General Insurance increased from \$6,825 to \$7,300 to match current calendar year 2026  
64 billing.  
65  
66 -Heat increased from \$600 to \$1,250  
67  
68 -Audit increased from \$1,740 to \$2,799 to match the actual cost for FY27  
69  
70 -Water Testing increased from \$2,500 to \$5,300 due mostly to a requirement to test for  
71 PFAS four times per year which will cost \$2,200.  
72  
73 -Pumps/Tanks reduced from \$4,000 to \$1,000. We don't have any anticipated purchases  
74 but want to keep something in there in case an unanticipated need arises.  
75  
76 -Water Line Repairs reduced from \$15,000 to \$10,000 due to anticipation of the Tilden  
77 Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. waterline replacement  
78  
79 -Asphalt Repair reduced from \$5,000 to \$3,000 due to anticipation of the Tilden Ave.,  
80 Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. waterline replacement  
81  
82 -Added a loan payment of \$23,750 for the Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd.  
83 waterline replacement project.  
84  
85 Cote confirmed that everybody rotates to work about 6 hours a weekend for testing.  
86  
87 ***Arneson presented the balances for Water Restricted and Unrestricted funds:***  
88  
89 There were \$172,050 in Water Unrestricted funds at the audited end of FY25. The  
90 projected end of FY26 Balance is \$203,738. The projected FY27 Water budget is  
91 \$408,089 which means that there should be at least 15% or \$61,213 left in Water  
92 Unrestricted funds.  
93  
94 The Projected end of FY26 Balances for Water Restricted funds are \$106,902 in Water  
95 Capital, \$175,991 in Short Term Capital, and \$81,100 in Distribution.

96  
97 ***Arneson presented notes regarding Wastewater Expenses:***  
98  
99 -Uniforms increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200  
100  
101 -Association Dues increased from \$800 to \$1,500  
102  
103 -System Permits/Certs/Licenses: increased from \$1,200 to \$1,500  
104  
105 -General Insurance increased from \$17,775 to \$19,251 to match the bill for calendar year  
106 2026.  
107  
108 -Biosolids Chemicals decreased from \$70,000 to \$60,000 to better match the actuals  
109 which are lower due to buying in bulk that reduces the price and a reduction in what we  
110 need to use which was based on a better analysis of what the system needs.  
111  
112 -Electricity – Pump Station increased from \$1,250 to \$1,625  
113  
114 -Water for Wastewater Treatment Facility decreased from \$32,000 to \$20,000 due to a  
115 reduced use of water in the process to treat wastewater.  
116  
117 -Audit increased from \$4,060 to \$6,531  
118  
119 -Contracted Operators decreased from \$41,340 to \$0 due to Brad Snow obtaining his  
120 Grade 5 license  
121  
122 -Biosolids Disposal reduced from \$140,000 to \$120,000 due to dryer solids which  
123 reduces volume and weight  
124  
125 -Equipment Purchases – Small increase from \$700 to \$1,000  
126  
127 -Building Maintenance increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to better match the needs of the  
128 building.  
129  
130 -Wastewater Facility Repair increased from \$15,000 to \$20,000  
131  
132 -Biosolids Facility Repair increased from \$15,000 to \$25,000  
133  
134 -Phosphorous loan payments conclude in FY26 this is a reduction of \$22,221.  
135  
136 -A repayment for the engineering for Gateway is starting in FY27 for \$1,360.  
137  
138 -Overall there is a reduction in expenses in FY26 so this would reduce the revenue raised  
139 from user fees from \$394,010 to \$319,785. The difference could be put into the  
140 Wastewater Capital Reserve to save for the 20-year upgrade.  
141  
142 Cote summarized there are a lot of things left status-quo but they are looking at getting  
143 rid of one phone company. There are small increases as the cost of everything increases.  
144

145 *Arneson presented the balances for Wastewater Restricted and Unrestricted funds:*

146

147 There were \$458,674 in Wastewater Unrestricted funds at the audited end of FY25. The  
148 projected end of FY26 Balance is \$390,660. The projected FY27 Wastewater budget is  
149 \$845,785 which means that there should be at least 15% or \$126,868 left in Wastewater  
150 Unrestricted funds.

151

152 The Projected end of FY26 Balances for Wastewater Restricted funds are \$169,933 in  
153 Water Capital, \$188,305 in Short Term Capital, and \$106,350 in Collection System.

154

155 *Arneson presented the balances for the Fire Protection Calculation*

156

157 The 5% of the Total Water Budget is \$20,404. There is \$18,098 for 48% Tank loan  
158 which means a total of \$38,503 that is charged to the taxpayers' general budget.

159

160

161 **Follow up on funding alternatives for the wastewater treatment facility 20-year**  
162 **upgrade**

163 Timestamp: 0:46

164 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b01_Rate_Increases_for_Repayment_Alternatives.xlsx)  
165 [3/3b01\\_Rate\\_Increases\\_for\\_Repayment\\_Alternatives.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b01_Rate_Increases_for_Repayment_Alternatives.xlsx)

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167 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b02_Rate_Increases_for_Repayment_Alternatives_including_Commercial_Rates.xlsx)  
168 [3/3b02\\_Rate\\_Increases\\_for\\_Repayment\\_Alternatives\\_including\\_Commercial\\_Rates.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b02_Rate_Increases_for_Repayment_Alternatives_including_Commercial_Rates.xlsx)

169

170 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b03_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_A.xlsx)  
171 [3/3b03\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_A.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b03_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_A.xlsx)

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173 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b04_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_B.xlsx)  
174 [3/3b04\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_B.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b04_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_B.xlsx)

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176 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b05_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_C.xlsx)  
177 [3/3b05\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_C.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b05_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_C.xlsx)

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179 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b06_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_D1.xlsx)  
180 [3/3b06\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_D1.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b06_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_D1.xlsx)

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182 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b07_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_D2.xlsx)  
183 [3/3b07\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_D2.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b07_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_D2.xlsx)

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185 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b08_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_E1.xlsx)  
186 [3/3b08\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_E1.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b08_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_E1.xlsx)

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188 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b09_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_E2.xlsx)  
189 [3/3b09\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V5\\_-\\_Alt\\_E2.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b09_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V5_-_Alt_E2.xlsx)

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191 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b10_Notes_on_1_Option_Tax_Alternative.pdf)  
192 [3/3b10\\_Notes\\_on\\_1\\_Option\\_Tax\\_Alternative.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b10_Notes_on_1_Option_Tax_Alternative.pdf)

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194 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water\\_Sewer\\_Commission/Meetings/2026/0](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b11_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V6_1_Option_Tax.xlsx)  
195 [3/3b11\\_User\\_Rate\\_Analysis\\_-\\_V6\\_1\\_Option\\_Tax.xlsx](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/03/3b11_User_Rate_Analysis_-_V6_1_Option_Tax.xlsx)  
196  
197 Wolaver summarized that they were all in agreement to get rid of the 30-year loan  
198 options.  
199  
200 Cote summarized the round table in Montpelier with all the septage receivers. They are  
201 one of a few places that wants to increase the amount of septage they take. Montpelier  
202 and Richmond handle 35% of all the septage in the State of Vermont. Cote stated that  
203 they have Congressional money earmarked for dewatering as part of the septage  
204 receiving upgrade. Cote reviewed the rule of thumb to never charge less for septage than  
205 you do the rate payers. The average rate for receiving septage is \$0.089 and Richmond  
206 charges \$0.085 which is not the lowest but on the low end. There is a fine line for the  
207 breaking point of haulers due to the distance to Richmond. Montpelier increases their  
208 rate every year similar to how Richmond changes it's rates for user.  
209  
210 Arneson presented the User Rate Analysis and suggested that Hoyle-Tanner could put a  
211 1.5-2% increase in septage rates each year. Hill summarized the risk of overestimating  
212 revenues for septage that might not show up and ends up on the rate payers. Cote  
213 confirmed that haulers are encouraged if they go to 24/7 receiving. Hill expressed  
214 concern about 24/7 receiving as residents might be woken up by the truck traffic on  
215 Esplanade. Hill observed that there are quiet hours in the Village. Cote stated that in  
216 the summer months, he will have four trucks ready to dump at 6:30 AM. Rabideau  
217 suggested a goal of 30,000 gallons of septage a day and increasing the rate by 1.5%  
218 every year. Arneson notes that Hoyle-Tanner had a septage rate increase at 3.5%. Cote  
219 explained Montpelier's ordinance that charges a few if a septage hauler brings in a bad  
220 load that damages the plant. Wolaver and Cote discussed having a contract with haulers  
221 where they would have a lower rate if they guaranteed a certain number of gallons a day.  
222  
223 Arneson presented the growth models where one is adding two or so customers per year  
224 and the other one is bumping it by double digits every 3-4 years. Hill expressed concern  
225 about that being plausible. Farr preferred the slower growth model.  
226  
227 Arneson presented the taxpayer sharing options. Wolaver stated that his pitch would be  
228 the Town needs to have restaurants which serves everybody including taxpayers.  
229 Rabideau observed that a \$500,000 house would pay ~\$2,500 a year. Hill stated that he  
230 does not think that is ever going to fly. Wolaver and Arneson reviewed that if they set a  
231 tax rate of \$20 per \$100,000 in home value then that would provide ~\$150,000 per year  
232 to go towards the bond payment.  
233  
234 Cote asked about the \$50,000 a year for future Capital Expenses. Arneson stated that he  
235 would ask about that.  
236  
237 Arneson presented the Local Options Tax. Farr stated it would be interesting to compare  
238 that to the taxpayer's adding \$20 per \$100,000 in house value. Hill observed that some  
239 people have talking about using the Local Options Tax to fund improvements to the  
240 Town Center. Wolaver stated they would follow up on which towns around Richmond  
241 have a Local Options Tax and to gauge how businesses might react to the tax.  
242

243 Arneson summarized that they will look at funding models with a 20-year loan, 30,000  
244 gallons in septage receiving, conservative growth, and a Local Option Tax. Arneson  
245 stated that he will confirm the fee for future Capital Expenses.

246  
247 Arneson summarized they could look at funding options with or without the Local  
248 Options Tax and taxpayer contributions. Arneson stated that he will send the feedback to  
249 Hoyle-Tanner and schedule them for an upcoming meeting.

250  
251

## 252 **Discussion of next steps in exploring locations for the wastewater pumpstation**

253 Timestamp: 1:54

254

255 Arneson reviewed the three different options. One option is rebuilding it in the same  
256 place but that includes some elevation and screening concerns. The second option is on  
257 the Kart property down the road but access is a question. The third option is across from  
258 Bressor's house by the bridge which needs to be checked for ledge. Arneson estimated  
259 that it would cost \$3,000-\$4,000 to drill some test pits. The access question at the Kart  
260 property would require about \$1,500 to do some research on the deeds. Arneson  
261 confirmed that the Town would have to purchase some property unless it is rebuilt in the  
262 same space. Poley stated that she was not in favor of putting it on the Kart property and  
263 is in favor of keeping it where it is. Wolaver suggested that they start conversations with  
264 Bressor about the cost of obtaining the property by the bridge. Farr stated that she  
265 preferred keeping it where it is. Cote confirmed that to rebuild in that location is a lot  
266 more expensive because it is in the floodplain.

267

268 *Farr moved to approve conducting ledge probes on the Bressor property in an amount*  
269 *not to exceed \$6,000. Rabideau seconded.*

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

271

272

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

274 -Housing Committee presentation

275 -Funding Alternatives for 20-year Upgrade

276 -Septage Rate Comparison

277

278

## 279 **Adjournment**

280

281 *Hill moved to adjourn. Rabideau seconded.*

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

283

284 **Meeting adjourned at: 8:30 PM**

285

286 **Chat file from Zoom: None**

287

288

289