

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of July 6, 2026

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

Members Absent: None

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

Others Present: The meeting was recorded for MMCTV Erin Wagg, Jeff Olesky, Lisa Curtis, Maria Brown, Michael Miller, Michael Parent, Trevor Brooks

MMCTV Video: <https://youtu.be/JdRFTJxrIkK?si=-AcO-nmdupNfisZg>

Call to Order: 5:00 PM

Welcome: Wolaver

Public Comment: None

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders: None

Warrants:

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

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

Minutes:

Sander moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2026. Farr seconded.

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

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Executive session for discussion of personnel issue

Timestamp: 0:05

Farr moved to find that premature public knowledge about a personnel issue would cause the Town or person to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Sander seconded.

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

Farr moved that we enter into executive session to discuss a personnel issue under the provisions of 1 VSA 313(a)(4) of the Vermont Statutes and to invite Town Manager Josh Arneson and Water and Wastewater Superintendent Steve Cote into the executive session. Sander seconded.

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

Sander moved to exit executive session. Farr seconded.

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

Consideration of making a recommendation to the Selectboard regarding candidates to fill the two seats on the Water and Sewer Commission that are reserved for customers of the water and/or wastewater system

Timestamp: 0:05

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4b1_WS_Commission_Interest_-_Wolaver_Morgan.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4b2_WS_Commission_Interest_-_Farr_Erin.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4b3_WS_Commission_Interest_-_Gillies_Merrick.pdf

Arneson summarized the three letters of interest for 1-year terms currently filled by Wolaver and Farr. The other letter of interest had some engineering background. The Commission will provide a recommendation to the Selectboard to discuss at the July 20 meeting. The first meeting for the new terms will be at the first meeting in August (Monday, 8/3/26).

Sander moved to recommend that the Selectboard appoint Erin Farr and Morgan Wolaver to one-year terms on the Water and Sewer Commission to fill seats reserved for customers of the water and/or wastewater system.

Roll Call Vote: Hill, Rabideau, Sander in favor. Farr & Wolaver abstain.

Motion approved.

Consideration of approval of final water and wastewater allocation for 114 East Main St.

Timestamp: 0:35

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4c1_Final_Water_Allocation_Request_114_E_Main_St..pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4c2_Final_Wastewater_Allocation_Request_114_E_Main_St..pdf

Arneson summarized the allocation and that he did receive a check payment.

Sander moved to approve final allocation of 210 gallons per day of wastewater and 280 gallons per day of water for 114 East Main St. Farr seconded.

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

Discussion of recommending that the Selectboard ask the voters of the Town of Richmond to approve a 1% local option tax on sales, meals & alcoholic beverages, and/or rooms with a portion of the revenue generated being used to help pay for the cost of necessary renovations to the Wastewater Treatment Facility

Timestamp: 0:35

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d1_How_to_Adopt_a_Local_Option_Tax_for_Vermont_towns.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d2_Local_Option_Tax_-_Brief_Overview_from_VLCT.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d3_Links_to_Information_Regarding_Local_Option_Tax.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d4_Guidance_on_Article_Wording_for_Local_Option_Tax.pdf

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d5_User_Rate_Alt_1_-_Base_Model.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d6_User_Rate_Alt_2_-_No_LOT.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d7_User_Rate_Alt_3_-_No_LOT_Add_Tax_Share.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d8_User_Rate_Alt_4_-_Add_Tax_Share.xlsx

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4d9_User_Rate_Alt_5_-_Add_Tax_Share_No_Loan_Suppression.xlsx

Arneson and the Commission reviewed the details of implementing at 1% Local Option Tax (LOT) presented in the packet and previous meetings. Arneson estimated around \$300,000 - \$350,000 a year would come to Richmond with a LOT. Arneson stated that

the payback scenario from Hoyle Tanner was to use ~50% of that revenue to go towards the payment of the bond. The LOT can benefit any municipal department in Town for a project. Farr suggested that it would be helpful for our customers to know the difference between the rates for the new upgrade. The people already on the system are going to do the payback. Arneson presented the payback scenarios. The Commission discussed the impact with residents and businesses. Cote explained how the costs to operate the plant have gone up significantly and they have a functioning sewer plant, but it is dangerously close to not being able to function. Hill suggested they should provide an FAQ to summarize the same questions at different times.

Review of wastewater report for the month of May

Timestamp: 1:37

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4e_May_2026_WR43_pdf.pdf

Arneson summarized that this could be a monthly report where Cote could provide more context in the future.

Update on Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. Waterline Replacement Project

Timestamp: 1:39

Cote provided an update for the next two weeks.

Update on cost for a property owners to install an additional curb stop in conjunction with the Waterline Replacement Project

Timestamp: 1:42

https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Water_Sewer_Commission/Meetings/2026/06/4g_Curb_Stop_Letters.pdf

Cote confirmed that the letters went out for the easements and corrected information with a few phone calls.

Superintendent's report

Timestamp: 1:45

Cote described the mixer fail in the water tank and the difficulty in putting them in by divers. Cote stated that the water tank had mixer problems from day one. The electronics for the old mixers were bad, then they didn't make the electronics for the mixers, then the

182 mixers themselves failed. Cote reported a few issues with the fluoride level but they are
183 working to get it back up. Cote stated that the chlorine levels are a little elevated. Cote
184 stated that wastewater plant is running but the polymer system is frustrating beyond
185 belief.

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188 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**

189 -Wastewater reporting

190 -Follow up FAQs

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193 **Adjournment**

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195 *Sander moved to adjourn. Farr seconded.*

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

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198 **Meeting adjourned at: 6:52 PM**

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200 **Chat file from Zoom:**

201 01:03:54 Maria Brown: Can you differentiate the \$39M between the larger
202 manufacturers and local retailers (e.g., hardware, grocery, etc.)?

203 01:08:12 Maria Brown: I ask since it was stated that they would likely not pay in

204 01:30:33 Trevor Brooks: “What does the Fund cost taxpayers?By adding one
205 cent to the municipal tax rate, renewing the Fund would cost taxpayers \$10 for every
206 \$100,000 of a property’s assessment. In 2025 that will generate around \$79,000 for
207 important, approved conservation projects across town.”

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