

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of August 3, 2026

Members Present: Merrick Gillies, 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, Cara LaBounty, Connie van Eeghen, Mary Houle, Michael Miller

MMCTV Video: https://youtu.be/Na8C1oJ_aTU?si=8KJvayVzvuxKFPIF

Call to Order: 6:00 PM

Welcome: Wolaver

Public Comment: None

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders: None

Warrants:

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

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

Minutes:

Sander moved to approve the minutes of July 20 & 23, 2026. Hill seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Hill, Sander, Wolaver in favor.

Rabideau abstains. Motion approved.

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Reorganization: Selection of Chair and Vice Chair

Timestamp: 0:03

Wolaver welcomed the new Commissioner, Merrick Gillies

Sander moved to appoint Merrick Gillies as Vice Chair of the Water and Sewer Commission. Rabideau seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Hill, Rabideau, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Gillies abstains. Motion approved.
Sander moved to appoint Morgan Wolaver as Chair of the Water and Sewer Commission. Rabideau seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Hill, Rabideau, Sander in favor. Wolaver abstains. Motion approved.

Review of Code of Ethics

Timestamp: 0:08

4b CodeofEthics 03-17-2025

Arneson summarized the annual requirement to review the Code of Ethics. Arneson illustrated the Code of Ethics, Acknowledgement Form, and Video Training online at: <https://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-meetings/all-committee-board-members>

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

Timestamp: 0:12

Cote summarized that Tilden passes all its tests with 14-15 services hooked up as of today. The finish coat will not be done until around the first week in September. Cote stated that the pedestrian walk will eventually cut to an 18-inch depth and then filled with crushed stone to give a base. Cote reported a couple of car instances on Tilden and Cochran that is being handled by the contractor, Munson, and the car owners. Cote illustrated that on Bridge St the progress is slow to a crawl due to an existing 4-inch 1950s era main line being too close to an existing 8-inch 1970s era main line.

Superintendent's report

Timestamp: 0:23

Cote stated that the Wastewater treatment plant is limping along. The press has been running well with the new VFD. The State inspected Stone Corral for pre-treatment and were impressed with the amount of work put into the upgrades at the plant. Cote stated that several of the curb stops in driveways are now going to be in the lane of traffic with valve boxes over them. The ones in the driveways were bent over. Cote illustrated that he replaced a curb stop by the pediatrics building while Highway was working on the sidewalks.

Follow up on discussion of possible 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: 0:29

4e01 How to Adopt a Local Option Tax for Vermont towns.pdf

98
99 4e02 Local Option Tax - Brief Overview from VLCT
100
101 4e03 Links to Information Regarding Local Option Tax
102
103 4e04 Guidance on Article Wording for Local Option Tax
104
105 4e05 Charts showing impact of LOT on future rates
106
107 4e06.5 Q A with State on LOT
108
109 4e06 VLCT Regarding Sunset of LOT
110
111 4e07 User Rate Alt 1 - Base Model
112
113 4e08 User Rate Alt 2 - No LOT
114
115 4e09 User Rate Alt 3 - No LOT Add Tax Share
116
117 4e10 User Rate Alt 4 - Add Tax Share
118
119 4e11 User Rate Alt 5 - Add Tax Share No Loan Suppression
120
121 Arneson illustrated the chart from the engineers that looked at percentage increase
122 without and with Local Option Tax for the Sewer. Arneson summarized the annual bill
123 projections from FY26 to FY31, which give alternatives with the baseline increase.
124 Arneson stated that the State estimated the value of revenue for the Local Option Tax at
125 around \$300,000. There is an additional burden on business owners as every quarter they
126 have to report to the State.
127
128 Hill stated that in order to move forward, they need to get a sense of the public's view.
129 Arneson stated that a next agenda item would be what they really want to do for next
130 steps to get the bond vote. The Local Option Tax has to be an in-person Town Meeting
131 vote. They should also explore the funding models of a bond vote with and without the
132 Local Option Tax. Arneson confirmed that you can put all the Local Options Tax
133 towards the Wastewater Treatment project and once it is paid off, put it towards the Town
134 Center building. LaBounty stated that the Local Option Tax is going to pit Village
135 against out of Village. LaBounty summarized that she pays for her own water treatment
136 and is not in support of subsidizing other people with some of the largest land values in
137 Town. Arneson confirmed that he would bring in Hoyle-Tanner reps to provide the
138 general outline for the Local Option Tax. Hill stated that the Selectboard will have to be
139 a major voice and have some of the same conversations.
140
141
142 **Follow up on discussion of potentially relocating the wastewater pump station to the**
143 **401 Bridge St. parcel**
144 Timestamp: 0:51
145 4f1 Requests from Bressors to relocate pump station
146

4f2 Richmond Bridge St PS and FM - Revised 10 1 2025 - REDUCED 1

Arneson reviewed that he included the requests in the packet but did not have much time from the last meeting. LaBounty stated that sometimes it's just cheaper to clean up than to rebuild and redo. Cote summarized cost of replacing the pump station from the last flood at ~\$58,000. Cote stated that the pump station has flooded 6 times since Hurricane Irene.

Update on cost increase from Casella for Sludge Management

Timestamp: 0:55

4g1 Chittenden CPI Letter 2026

4g2 CPI FY26-27 CSWD

Cote summarized the ~\$3,000 cost increase on a projected \$120,000 budget so they should still be under projections.

Review of July water data

Timestamp: 0:56

4h Monthly Water Report July 2026

Arneson stated that Cote and staff do a great job of keeping all the numbers within the right range and being transparent with reporting.

Discuss Items for Next Agenda:

-LOT

-Pump station Relocation

-Replacement project

Adjournment

Sander moved to adjourn. Rabideau seconded.

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

Meeting adjourned at: 6:58 PM

Chat file from Zoom: None