

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of August 17, 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: Recorded by MMCTV Erin Wagg, Michael Miller

MMCTV Video: <https://youtu.be/gq18cyiw8Is?si=E2UfhQG3bI5xsUgi>

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

Minutes:

Sander moved to approve the minutes of August 3, 2026. Hill seconded.

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

Purchase Orders:

Sander moved to approve purchase order number 5337 to CSWD for sludge disposal in the amount of \$120,000.00. Hill seconded

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

Sander moved to approve purchase order number 5338 to various chemical suppliers for sodium aluminate in the amount of \$17,510.00. Hill seconded

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

Sander moved to approve purchase order number 5339 to various chemical suppliers for polymers in the amount of \$70,000.00. Hill seconded.

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

Warrants:

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

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

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53 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

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56 **Consideration of moving the first Water and Sewer Commission meeting in**
57 **September to Tuesday, September 8, 2026 due to the holiday on Monday,**
58 **September 7, 2026**

59 Timestamp: 0:08

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61 *Sander moved to move the first Water and Sewer Commission meeting in September to*
62 *Tuesday, September 8, 2026 due to the holiday on Monday, September 7, 2026. Hill*
63 *seconded.*

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

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

68 Timestamp: 0:07

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70 Cote stated that the old water main at Tilden is shut off and everybody is on the new one.
71 There are two connections left to make now that the old one is discontinued. Cote
72 summarized that the Bridge St main will be flushed and pressure tested by the end of the
73 week. If the samples pass, then they can start hooking up services. Next week, they will
74 start connecting at the end of Cochran Rd. The paving on Tilden and Bridge will occur in
75 the first week in September if not earlier to consider the start of school. The big item left
76 is pecking the ledge on Cochran Rd.

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78
79 **Update on Water and Wastewater cybersecurity in light of recent Iran-linked**
80 **cyberattacks on local water systems**

81 Timestamp: 0:17

82 [4c Vermont Rural Water Association newsletter on Cyber Attacks](#)

83
84 Cote stated that the cyberattacks have been on Programmable Logic Controllers (PLCs)
85 which are computers that run everything at wastewater plants. There is a plan to put in a
86 new control panel. Rural Water confirmed the list of PLCs in the wastewater plant and
87 there are none in the water plant. Cote stated that the SCADA system is online but there
88 is a firewall. The SCADA system is due to be upgraded. The PLCs they have run the
89 septage machine and the de-watering, and the worst-case scenario is going back to
90 manual control. Cote confirmed that the SCADA system is password protected through
91 Simpleroute. His computer at home has access to SCADA and it is double password
92 protected with phone authentication.

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95 **Consideration of sending to Senators Sanders and Welch in support of a bill to fund**
96 **cyber defenses for local water systems after a spate of Iran-linked cyberattacks**

97 Timestamp: 0:26

Wolaver reviewed the letter to ask the Senators to support the bill. Arneson reviewed he would put it on letterhead, and the Commissioners could sign it at the Town Clerk's Office. Cote stated that they started working on cyber-security checklists about two years ago.

Wolaver moved to approve the letter to Senator Sanders and Welch in support of a bill to fund cyber defenses for local water systems after a spate of Iran-linked cyberattacks.

Rabideau seconded.

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

Superintendent's report

Timestamp: 0:32

Cote reported that the waterline has been taking a lot of time. The sewer plant is running really well right now. Cote complimented Erin Kelley's ability as an operator. Cote stated that the aeration tank is going to be switched this week. Cote summarized that they are keeping the chlorine a little high in the water with all the digging that is going on.

Review of training provided by Vermont League of Cities and Towns regarding the Local Option Tax

Timestamp: 0:37

[4f1 muni-mornings-lot-vermont-tax-dept](#)

[4f2 local-option-tax-for-munimornings-webinar](#)

Arneson reviewed that he was with Wolaver and Hill at the meeting with the VLCT presentation from the packet. It illustrates how different Towns have approached a Local Option Tax vote. It is recommended not to put an estimated number into the motion but develop a Selectboard policy that says it is for types of projects. You can also use it to offset Property Taxes. Arneson stated that they will be discussing with Hoyle Tanner and use the September 8 meeting to confirm how to get to the bond vote and on the Town Meeting Warning. Hill stated that this will require a fair amount of outreach and education. People are cynical and cautious about just another tax. They should be clear about the intent and describe why voters should vote for it. Arneson confirmed that the money has to be used for a municipal or water/sewer related project. Gillies suggested sharing more from an operator's perspective. Arneson reviewed that they could use the video tour of the plant from last year

<https://www.richmondvt.gov/calendar/meeting/special-meeting-of-the-water-and-sewer-commission-9-29-25>).

Cote stated that anyone can come down to the plant and staff will provide a tour. Hill and Arneson suggested using the Farmers Market and Holiday Market to reach different citizens.

Follow up on discussion of potentially relocating the wastewater pump station to the

147 **401 Bridge St. parcel**

148 Timestamp: 0:49

149

150 Arneson stated that he did not make much progress since the last meeting but will get
151 some numbers to paper for the September 8 meeting. He will look at the costs of
152 rebuilding in place compared to rebuilding at the Bressor's property. Cote confirmed
153 they currently added a curb stop for the Historical Society and an 8-inch water main
154 going to the corner of Bressor's property on Bridge St. If the pump station relocation
155 falls through, then the Historical Society and Bressor will pay for those. Cote confirmed
156 he wanted to get the storm drains installed before they are done for the winter for
157 Highway can grind and repave it over next year.

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160 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:** None were discussed in the meeting

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163 **Adjournment**

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165 *Sander moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

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

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168 **Meeting adjourned at:** 6:58 PM

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170 **Chat file from Zoom:** None

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