

Town of Richmond
Meeting of Water and Sewer Commission
Minutes of September 8, 2026

Members Present:

Merrick Gillies, Greg Rabideau, David Sander, Morgan Wolaver

Members Absent: Bard Hill

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

Others Present: Recorded by MMCTV Erin Wagg, Eric Doe, Gary Bressor, Jean Bressor, Jon Olin, Kirstin DiPietro Worden, Michael Miller, Nicole Davis, Paul Hobbs

MMCTV Video: <https://youtu.be/-CA3iniIYc0?si=-6ieyookSwc8tPwh>

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 17, 2026. Gillies seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Rabideau, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*

Purchase Orders: None

Warrants:

*Sander moved to approve the Warrants as presented. Gillies seconded.
Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Rabideau, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Discussion with Hoyle Tanner on next steps to hold a bond vote in March for the renovations to the Wastewater Treatment Facility and the Wastewater Pump Station

Timestamp: 0:02

49
50 Davis (Hoyle-Tanner) summarized that public outreach can build consensus within the
51 community to support the bond vote. The scope of the project includes a project-specific
52 website that can grow and expand on the available information on the project. Davis
53 stated that they are looking at a public tour on October 17. Davis stated that they can
54 include mailers with the October and January sewer bills. Davis stated that a Town
55 mailer would be roughly 1,600 pieces of mail. Everybody in Town will be voting on the
56 warrant article for the bond.

57
58 Cote confirmed that October 17 worked for a tour. Cote illustrated that they are inviting
59 Congressional representatives, State representatives, Selectboard, Water Sewer
60 Commission, Housing Committee, Planning Commission to a tour on September 24.
61 Cote stated that on September 30 he is providing a tour for the 6th grade at Camels Hump.

62
63 Gillies stated that this community likes to chitter-chatter mostly on Front Porch Forum,
64 so once general public outreach has started the website should be ready to go. People are
65 going to have sticker shock and want to know why. Hobbs (Hoyle-Tanner) stated that
66 they plan to have the website active before the tour but not before the flyer. Hobbs stated
67 that they brainstormed FAQs for the website. The flyer would notify people of the tour
68 on October 17. Davis summarized that they have the language to share the importance of
69 increasing the infrastructure for the benefit of everybody. Wolaver clarified how the
70 Town taxpayers vote to approve the bond but will not be paying for it unless they also
71 pass the Local Option Tax (LOT).

72
73 Cote expressed his concern of not having a definite decision on how they are going to pay
74 for it with or without a LOT. Wolaver stated that they would put together two
75 possibilities which illustrate the payments with or without the LOT. Arneson
76 summarized that they would look at the base models with no LOT to present an estimate
77 of what the rates would look like. There are two votes and two choices: one is to approve
78 the work they need to get the bond passed and the other is how to pay it back. Olin
79 (Hoyle Tanner) summarized the plan for user rates has options to reassess each year. The
80 other grant they are pursuing is a spring application, so they won't find out until
81 summertime.

82
83 Rabideau stated that they should reach out to the business community as they talk about
84 the LOT. He is hearing from local business owners about the administrative overhead for
85 the LOT. Arneson stated that if the Selectboard agrees to put the LOT on the ballot, then
86 they need separate FAQs and outreach. Rabideau observed that businesses are not at a
87 competitive disadvantage as many other municipalities are doing it. Arneson
88 summarized that they have meetings on September 21 and October 5 to approve a flyer
89 and website before the October 17 tour. Hobbs confirmed that they could share the
90 website before it goes live. Arneson summarized that the Commission could look at the
91 website on October 5 so that tweaks could be made before it goes live. Davis stated that
92 she provided information in the chat for Woodstock's project website as an example
93 (<https://woodstockmainwwtf.com/>).

94
95
96 **Follow up on discussion of potentially relocating the wastewater pump station to the**
97 **401 Bridge St. parcel**

Timestamp: 0:32

4b1 Location 0 vs 2 Evaluation and Estimated Costs Memo - August 2026

4b2 Requests from Bressors to relocate pump station with cost estimates

Doe (Hoyle-Tanner) summarized that last year he provided a presentation on three different sites. Arneson reviewed that the primary alternative site on 401 Bridge St which is the Bressor's parcel just uphill closer to the bridge from the current site. They originally thought it would only come out of the ground 1-2 feet and that it would be less expensive. When Doe crunched the numbers, the pump station would have to be 3-4 feet out of the ground and cost ~\$185,000 more than the current location. Wolaver estimated that to meet the 500-year flood, the structure would have to be about 6-7 feet above ground. Doe confirmed that elevation even though there would be some buried elements. The generator and control panel need to be put in a position that floodwater would not impact them during high flood events. Doe confirmed that if they built the pump station in the original location, it would be 9-10 feet above ground and ~\$180,000 less expensive. The alternate location would require an additional leg from the existing pump station to the new pump station which is adjacent to a wetland. Doe stated that directional boring is not a cheap way either, but he does not have a quote on that.

Cote stated that he thinks it is cheaper to directionally bore it rather than open cut a line at that depth. Gillies summarized his concern about the existing location as everything is within a tight footprint that is wet with existing infrastructure. Gillies stated that a separate location provides the ability to control the construction and installation of the gravity line. Doe confirmed that this is a 60% design of a preliminary pump station, so it is very early. Olin reviewed that the Commission would decide on the preferred location based on costs of construction and Right-of-Way permitting. Cote observed potential costs of bypass pumping when construction is half-completed and another flood occurs. BressorG listed some issues he had with the report that suggested that he tried to put residential housing in a wetland. BressorG stated that there is a benefit to moving it 50 feet towards the bridge because it is out of the main current. Doe stated that it would be challenging to move it closer to the street with the other utilities there.

Olin stated that in order to advance into design, the Commission needs to pick a solution source. Rabideau illustrated that they might be saving \$180,000 by building it in the current location but it would cost dollars elsewhere to make it look good. This might happen in both locations and there is the encumbrance of the Bressor's land to consider. Doe confirmed that they would want to be several feet away from the current vault and from the water main if they built in the alternate location. Doe confirmed that the Probe D location is far enough away from the vault and water main. Olin stated that he could meet on the Probe D site with Bressor and Rabideau to help with the layout. Arneson will send an email to confirm the site visit on Friday at 8 AM.

Update on Tilden Ave., Bridge St., and Cochran Rd. Waterline Replacement Project Superintendent's report

Timestamp: 1:34

Cote reported that Tilden is pretty much done, with one little hiccup that a new installed

curb stop has low water pressure. They need to dig it up to confirm there isn't a pinch that reduces the water flow. Cote described the Round Church/Cochran Rd boil water notice was caused by installing two services on the lateral to a fire hydrant which should not have been done. The end of Cochran Rd is tested, and services are ready as soon as Munson hooks them back up. Cote stated that Bridge St is all connected on a new 12-inch line. The last 200 feet of pipe on Cochran Rd is ledge, so it took a day to lay 40-feet of pipe. Wolaver observed that they need a new landscaping company for Tilden as he does not think they added any grass seed but just threw hay over. Rabideau asked about a letter of concern which described that the water system was ruining Richmond. Cote stated that he addressed the concerns with Munson's on-site supervisor. The resident who wrote the letter did not want to get involved any further. Cote described that one flagger had an epileptic fit and another flagger got hit when somebody did not stop coming off Cochran Rd.

Superintendent Report

Timestamp: 1:50

Cote stated that the water system is plugging along well. They are addressing a few minor breakdowns at the plant. Cote passed his Water 1 exam so now he can take his Water 5.

Review of August 2026 water data

Timestamp: 1:50

4e Richmond Water Report August 2026

Cote stated that they elevated the chlorine numbers a bit with the construction going on and to avoid prolonged boil water notices. The State wants it at 0.8 mg/L but they are running at 1.2 mg/L. He has not had any complaints.

Executive session for discussion of personnel issue

Timestamp: 1:53

Sander moved to find that premature public knowledge about a personnel issue would cause the Town or person to suffer a substantial disadvantage. Rabideau seconded. Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Rabideau, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.

Sander 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. Rabideau seconded.

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

Rabideau moved to exit executive session. Sander seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Rabideau, Wolaver in favor. Sander not in favor. Motion approved.

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198 **Discuss Items for Next Agenda:**
199 -Pump Station Location
200 -Hoyle-Tanner Updates
201 -Flyer
202 -Selectboard options
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205 **Adjournment**
206
207 *Rabideau moved to adjourn. Gillies seconded.*
208 *Roll Call Vote: Gillies, Rabideau, Sander, Wolaver in favor. Motion approved.*
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210 **Meeting adjourned at: 8:06 PM**
211
212 **Chat file from Zoom:**
213 00:38:21 Nichole Davis, Hoyle Tanner:What will the project cost?
214 The upgrade is estimated at \$34.26 million. The warrant article seeks approval for a not-
215 to-exceed amount of \$35 million to allow for flexibility and contingency during
216 construction.
217 How will the project be funded?
218 The Town has secured a \$1 million CDS grant from the US EPA for the upgrade project.
219 The Town is also pursuing state and federal grants to further reduce local costs, including
220 EDA Disaster Supplemental Grant and CWSRF Pollution Control Grant. All of the grant
221 programs require voter approval and support of local matching funds.
222 Will local funds be used?
223 That is currently being explored. The Town is evaluating Town reserves and local option
224 tax revenues to offset the cost to ratepayers.
225 Who votes on this project?
226 All registered voters in Woodstock may vote on this project, regardless of whether their
227 property is currently connected to the sewer system.
228 00:42:39 MMCTV Erin Wagg: What is website again?
229 00:43:21 Nichole Davis, Hoyle Tanner:FAQs – Main Wastewater Treatment Facility
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