

BOARD OF SELECTMEN / SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday March 22, 2023 – 6:00 PM – Hybrid

PRESENT: Roger Manzolini, Chair; Neal Pilson; Alan Hanson; Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator; Donna MacNichol, Special Town Counsel; Jenny Hensel, Pres. NRC; Matthew Mozian, Att’y. for the Residents; Mark Bobrowski, Att’y. for the Town; Ira Grossman, Resident; Jeff Morse, Resident.

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Approval of the Minutes of the February 8, 2023 and February 22, 2023 Meetings of the Board of Selectmen:

Neal moved to approve the minutes as corrected. He was seconded by Al and the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Discussion of Petition Article and Conversations with BNRC and Residents Regarding Perry’s Peak Road:

BNRC had previously asked that the Town take Perry’s Peak Road by eminent Domain. The Board’s response was to ask the parties involved to come to a resolution, which did not happen. The Board now can either wait for a longer time for a resolution to be found or wait for a decision from the Land Court, which could go either way. Neal suggested that the Board would support having the attorneys on both sides mediate a solution. There is a need for a genuine effort to settle so that the three parties involved (The BNRC, Richmond, Residents of Perry’s Peak Road) can move forward with an understanding as to the future use of Hollow Fields and avoid potential risks and costs of seeking to bring a court action to create a Public Way by Eminent Domain.

Roger’s position was that a vote should be taken at the next meeting of the BOS, which would give everyone two additional weeks to work things out. He believes a mutual agreement is possible. Al agreed with that stand.

Donna MacNichol said that the Town understands that they cannot force mediation, but asked if both attorneys would be willing to participate in mediation for the sake of resolving the issue.

Neal noted that the Petition being presented at the Town Meeting will be submitted for a vote at the Town Meeting, whether the mediation process is still ongoing or not.

Public Comment: Jenny Hensel, President of the NRC said she was delighted to hear about the willingness to go to mediation. Mark Bobrowski, Attorney for the BNRC added that he would welcome mediation and noted that he and Attorney Mozian have been in conference to attempt to reach a resolution. Attorney Mozian said that having the Town involved in the mediation process would be most helpful and he hoped the Board would vote on that issue at this time.

Roger moved to direct the Town’s Attorney, on behalf of the Town, to begin to put together a mediation process with the attorneys on both sides. He was seconded by Al.

Attorney Bobrowski raised an alternate option; he cited a recent case in which both parties agreed that the road was neither private nor public and went on to resolve the remaining issues. The Land Court accepted that outcome.

After further discussion, Neal moved the question on Roger’s motion and asked for a vote. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Setting of Sewer Operating and Maintenance Bills: Sewer Operating and Maintenance Bills are to be mailed by the end of this month and are due by May 1, 2023. The amount of the bills has reduced from \$406.80 to \$403.79. Neal moved to approve the Sewer Operating and Maintenance Bills for distribution. He was seconded by Al and the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

TOWN CENTER DISCUSSION:

Roger noted that there were no bills to be paid or any other issue requiring a vote by the Board. He was impressed by the progress being made on the building. There was no discussion on the status of the building.

Neal suggested that the Board needs to think seriously about the disposition of this building. What are the next steps to be taken after the Town vacates the building? There was a discussion of various options and choices and consideration of the Town's responsibilities before the building can be sold.

The Town Administrator Updates: Danielle spoke about the Town's problem with ownership of the domain name on the internet. She suggested gradually transitioning from a .Org to a .Gov address in order to provide clear ownership of the domain name and for much greater security than we enjoy at this time. She also requested that the Monthly I.T. Fee be increased to \$130/month so that we can be covered by the next level of cyber security. A short discussion resulted in the Board giving Danielle the authorization to accomplish both.

The Town Caucus will take place on March 27th at 6:30 PM here at Town Hall. Wednesday March 29th is the schedule for the second webinar from the Storm Water Management Grant.

Sewer Matters: None

Selectmen's Matters: Al asked that the burning season be extended by a week to accommodate the extensive brush and tree limbs that have been torn down by the recent storm. Chief Traver will be asked to do that.

Roger raised the issue of compensation for the Town's Inspection Services. Unlike other towns, where Inspectors are paid a regular salary, Richmond pays its inspectors by the job and given the large number of inspections required during the building of the new Town Center, the amount in the budget is inadequate. There was an agreement by the Board that the Town will pay inspectors for those additional services on town-owned properties. Roger will recommend to the Building Committee that our inspectors are to be paid per inspection and that those funds will come out of the Building Contingency Funds.

There being no further business before the Board, Neal moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM. He was seconded by Al and the motion was carried by unanimous consent.

Signed:

Roger Manzolini, Chair

