

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Wednesday March 9, 2022 – 6:00 PM – Via Zoom Exclusively

PRESENT: Neal Pilson, Chair; Alan Hanson, Selectman; Roger Manzolini, Selectman; Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator; Ron Veillette, Con. Com.; Pat Callahan, Phase 2 Bldg. Cte.; Tony Segal, Chair, Board of Health

Neal opened the meeting at 6:04 PM with

Approval of Minutes of the February 18, 2022 meeting of the Board of Selectmen: Changes provided by both Neal and Roger were made and Roger moved to approve the minutes. Alan seconded the motion, which passed via unanimous roll-call vote: Pilson, aye; Manzolini, aye; Hanson, aye.

Town Administrator Updates: Danielle reported that the Town has switched its I.T. Company and is now using the same one the school uses. They are currently working on software updates and installing a new phone system with new instruments at no additional cost. The I.T. company and the phone company will be the same once installation is completed within the next couple of weeks.

The Action Grant for culvert replacement at Sleepy Hollow Road: All work done on the culvert so far has been accomplished at no cost to the Town. The grant includes a Storm Water Management Plan which will assess all storm water culverts and create a maintenance plan to reduce issues with flooding. It also incorporates education for the public to teach homeowners how what they do on their property impacts storm water runoff. There will be demonstrations to explain what they can do with planting sites to reduce water runoff provided by the Housatonic Valley Assn. and Mass. Audubon working with Helio Landscape Design Company.

All of that, however, is contingent on Richmond being able to fund a 20% match, which will likely be about \$200,000.00. Danielle is hoping to be able to take that money out of the ARPA funds or Free Cash or Stabilization.

Timeline: Apply in May with the knowledge of where the matching funds will come from. The Town currently has a very good chance of obtaining the grant.

A discussion of the issue of where the matching funds will come from, the total cost of the replacement of the culvert on Sleepy Hollow (estimated at \$400,000.00) and possible sources for the matching fund. The discussion included Ron Veillette's reminder that the Con. Com. already does a lot of education of that sort in their hearings. He also remarked that he has discussed with Bob Gniadek, Chair of the Finance Cte., his thought that the Town does not need Sleepy Hollow Road as a through street. It could be ended at the Dublin Road Bridge and money that would be spent on Sleepy Hollow could be spent on culvert work on other roads.

Update from the Phase 2 Bldg. Cte.: Pat Callahan explained the problems with the original bidding process and the timing that would have been too close to the Annual Town Meeting to make sense. Therefore, the timeline was moved up as follows:

Begin advertising for bids – March 17th

Have completed plans for the project – March 23rd

Receive Sub Contractor bids – April 13

Receive General Contractor bids – May 4th

That would provide two weeks in which to understand any problems that may have arisen, what will be needed from the Town and where any needed additional funds could come from.

On June 4th the Town would accept the low bid, two weeks after the Annual Town Meeting.

There was general approval of the schedule as outlined.

Discussion of Masking Requirements in Richmond: Tony Segal, Chair of the Board of Health, reported that in the Board's meeting last Tuesday, they were delighted to learn that this area is now a low-risk area for the transmission of the COVID virus. Nevertheless, the Board felt reluctant to abolish the masking requirement this month. They will watch the situation to be sure there is no rebound of the number of COVID cases and, if there is not, will almost certainly rescind the Masking requirement at their next meeting in April.

Roger voiced his preference for the masking requirement to be revoked immediately but supported the Board of Health's decision. Tony will advise Danielle after the next Board of Health meeting as to the outcome and the Board of Selectmen will make that announcement at their subsequent meeting.

Discussion of ARPA Funds, Declaration of Loss of Revenue and Allocation of Funds: Danielle advised the Board that a revised rule has made it quite simple for Towns to apply for ARPA funds by making a one-time Declaration of Loss of Revenue to be used for government services as listed in the final rule, the final allocation to be made at a future date. The amount of ARPA funds will be \$423,252.00 and they may be used for: construction of schools and hospitals; road building, maintenance and infrastructure, environmental remediation; health services, general government administration; staff and administrative facilities and the Fire Department.

Danielle pointed out that the Town's auditor has been given the authority to approve any specific use of the funds. After a discussion in which it was made clear that both the Richmond auditor and the Town Counsel approved the declaration, Roger moved that the Town of Richmond is declaring a one-time revenue loss in the amount of \$423,252.00 to be used for government services as listed in the final rule. The total allocation for those categories will be determined later. The motion was seconded and passed via unanimous roll-call vote: Pilson, aye; Manzolini, aye; Hanson, aye.

Conservation Commission – Request for Appointment of Tom Potter as a Full Member: Ron Veillette asked the Board to move Bob Dahlen to Associate Membership as he will be moving out of state in the near future and to fill his full membership seat with Tom Potter. A discussion of Mr. Potter’s qualifications found that he has an excellent background, including working with the DEP in wastewater and would constitute an excellent addition to the Con. Com.

Neal moved to approve the motion as noted above. Roger seconded the motion, which passed via unanimous roll-call vote: Pilson, aye; Manzolini, aye; Hanson, aye.

Neal publicly thanked Mr. Dahlen for his many years of excellent service to the Town.

Ron then asked that the Board be advised that Allison Cole, an Associate Member of the Con. Com. has resigned as she has moved out of the County. It was so noted.

Public Comment: Ron reported on the situation at 159 Willow Drive. There are two separate Enforcement Orders on that property: building codes and conservation issues. He was told that the owner would appeal to the ZBA, however, that board has seen no appeal to date. The Con. Com. has not begun citations as they are waiting for the Zoning Enforcement Office to take the first action. They may have to reissue the Enforcement Order and set a date for the issuance of citations if no further action is taken by the owner. Danielle reported that she has spoken with the Zoning Enforcement Office who said he is waiting for the owner to submit a permit request and, if that did not occur within a reasonable amount of time, he would either push further for start fining.

Selectmen’s Matters: Roger wanted to thank Claudia Ryan at Town Hall for her help in findings the file needed to locate a septic system Roger needed to work on.

Sewer Matters: None

There being no further business before the Board, Alan moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 PM. Roger seconded the motion which passed via unanimous roll-call vote: Pilson, aye; Manzolini, aye; Hanson, aye.

Signed:

Neal Pilson, Chair

