

BOARD OF SELECTMEN / SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday September 14, 2022 – 6:00 PM – Hybrid

PRESENT: Roger Manzolini, Chair; Alan Hanson, Selectman; Neal Pilson, Selectman (via Zoom); Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator; Pete Beckwith, Superintendent of Highways; Tom Grizey, Electrical Inspector/Sewers; Ron Veillette, Chair of the Con. Com.; Steve Traver, Fire Chief; Holly Stover; Dick Stover; Mr. Proper, Richmond Telephone Co. Rep.; Rick Bell.

Approval of the Minutes of the August 10, 2022 and the August 24, 2022 meetings of the Board of Selectmen: Al moved to approve both sets of minutes as read. He was seconded by Neal and the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

Richmond Telephone Co – Summit Rd and Rte. 41 Intersection Pole Location Hearing: Mr. Proper came before the Board to request approval for the installation of two new telephone poles along Rte. 41 and the removal of the existing pole in the middle of Summit Rd.

Roger moved to approve the application. Alan seconded the motion, which was carried by unanimous vote.

Traffic and Speeding Recommendations from Ron Veillette and Neal Pilson: The traffic situations deemed to be potentially dangerous were looked at throughout Richmond. The information obtained was put into a letter drafted by Neal. That letter and the information it contained was opened for discussion.

Neal pointed out that Danielle had advised him that the State Police cannot function as advisors or consultants on the issue of traffic as they are the enforcement body. Therefore, Neal suggested deferring sending any letter to the State Police until after the next meeting in order to avoid asking for something that cannot happen. He did not, however, wish to give up finding methods to encourage drivers to reduce their speed or to address those locations where the issue is sightlines rather than speed.

There was a lengthy discussion of some steps that have already been taken to address the issue of traffic safety in town such as flashing radar signs, which seem to have an impact on speed. The consensus was that some progress has already been made in this regard and that it would be wise to advise the residents of Richmond of the information contained in the response to the Board's statement of concerns and what the Town has been doing and plans to continue to do to resolve the problem of traffic safety.

Danielle reported that she has contacted a Speed Study Company about possibly getting the posted speed limits lowered on certain roads. She was advised by them that a full speed study on five locations will cost from \$15,000 to \$20,000 before the cost of going to the State and that there is a risk that the data might show a need to raise rather than lower the speed limit.

It was decided to review all the information available and revisit the issue at the next meeting.

Ron noted that the analysis he was given by a member of the State Police was couched in personal notes to him. He will ask for permission to make that information public.

PanMass Bike Challenge Special Event Permit: Danielle presented the request to the Board. Fire Chief Steve Traver reported that he has met with MEMA and the Emergency Crews and determined that there are no safety issues to be concerned about. The route of the event was discussed, and a map of the course was reviewed. The State Police have looked at the route and determined that it is similar to previous years' and poses no concern for them. Safety issues have been addressed.

Roger moved that the Special Event Permit be approved. The motion was seconded by Neal and passed by unanimous vote.

USDA-Agricultural Farmland as a Local Importance Delegation – Discussion on Path Forward and Next Steps: This is purely a self-nomination program that incurs no cost to the Town. The only caveat is that once a landowner has signed on to the program, that land is protected from development in perpetuity. That is in keeping with the philosophy of Richmond in terms of maintaining open land. Roger noted that he sees no unintended consequences to the Town and moved to allow the USDA to proceed with the program. Neal seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

TOWN CENTER DISCUSSION:

- 1. Discussion/Vote on Invoices / Change Orders:** An invoice in the amount of \$498,070.70, which was approved by the Building Committee for payment to the General Contractor, The work having been done and approved; Roger moved to approve payment of the invoice. He was seconded by Al and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.
- 2. Change Order – Provide power to the work trailer, water booster \$8,496.** This amount was budgeted in a line item and was endorsed and approved by the Building Cte. Roger moved to approve the payment. He was seconded by Neal and the motion carried by unanimous consent.
- 3. Status of Building –** The foundation for the library section of the building is nearly complete. The foundation for the Town Hall portion needs to be done. Progress is being made at a reasonable pace and the quality of the work is good. Steel work and framing in will begin in the next couple of weeks. All necessary decisions for the interiors have been made and a Progress Report from P3 will be available shortly.

Contract with Weston & Sampson and MOU with W. Stockbridge for MVP Climate Resilient Stormwater Plan: This work will be done with a grant received in common with West Stockbridge. Richmond will take the lead as it already has MVP status. According to the MOU, Richmond will pay 20% (\$40,000) and 5% in kind (hours of Danielle and Peter). West Stockbridge will pay \$40,000 and provide 5% in in-kind services. All monies to be paid out will

come from the Town of Richmond and all State Reimbursements will return to Richmond. Richmond will then bill West Stockbridge for the cash-match portion .

Roger moved to approve the contract. Neal seconded the motion but asked about the amount of the fee for the engineer to do a storm water study, which he felt was excessive. He was also concerned about not having seen a clear description of the Scope of Work. Peter Beckwith outlined the process involved and the scope of work that will be done. That will include public outreach and education to teach residents about nature-based solutions and how they can help with storm water on private properties. Moreover, all that work will be done for both towns including a second phase of culvert repair work, which will take both towns to the bidding process. At that point, each town will be able to apply for a grant to repair those culverts, which will be bid-ready. In other words, an entire Storm Water Management Plan, including public outreach and education for two towns will cost \$348,000.

The motion having been made and seconded, Roger called for a vote. After some additional discussion and explanation of the services and projects to be included in the grant, a vote was called, and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

Memorandum of Understanding with West Stockbridge: Roger moved to approve the MOU with West Stockbridge. Alan seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Public Comment: Rick Bell asked whether the town had a blight protection policy. Roger replied that it does not, but that item should be placed on the agenda for future discussion.

Rick then noted that weeds and small trees growing in the ditches on Pine Grove Drive that feed the culverts are filling the culverts with debris and the rain then moves pavement into them. He asked if that was on the list of repairs to be done. He was assured that it is on the list to be gotten to as soon as it can.

Rick asked about the Church Lane extension. He asked if the Town believes that the extension is a public or a private way. Roger responded that it is a private way belonging to the church but is being treated as a public way as part of an agreement with the church as to ownership of the Town Hall. Rick's concern was that any work done on that extension might have to be redone to make it conform to the State's requirements for a public way. Peter assured Rick that the road will be made 21 feet wide, which is beyond the minimum required by the State.

Holly Stover voiced her disappointment at the cancellation of the Sewer Information Meeting. Roger also shared that disappointment but noted that since Paul Lisi, Town Treasurer/Tax Collector, who is an important player at that meeting, was not available to attend, it became necessary to reschedule sometime in mid-October.

Holly Stover described the bullying that took place from town residents at a recent meeting of the Conservation Commission. She asked what can be done about it. Roger noted that trainings are available to teach the correct handling of such situations. The fact that the Town would take steps to arrange for such trainings would indicate that there is a problem serious enough to

hold a special seminar on dealing with it. It was suggested that Lauren Broussel publish an article in the *Richmond Record*. Ron Veillette, Chair of the Con. Com. pointed out that most of the bullying is coming in the form of emails. Roger noted that he supports not responding to and trashing abusive or anonymous messages.

Dick Stover reported that the Zoning Board of Appeals had met with the owner of 159 Willow Street and advised him to get an attorney and an architect or engineer. That has not happened. He asked the Zoning Enforcement Officer to follow up on several issues the owner has been ignoring and to start issuing fines. Danielle said she had asked Paul Greene, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, to follow up on that issue and issue fines. At the meeting of the Con. Com last night it was decided that Shep Evans will send a letter to the homeowner warning that fines will begin to be issued.

Selectmen's Matters: None

Sewer Matters: Tom Grizey asked what action will be taken concerning the pumps. Roger replied that he has asked three times for Tom to provide a list of everything we need to have on hand and the town will purchase those items. He asked that Tom provide that list to Danielle and that she include a vote to buy those supplies on the agenda for the next meeting.

Town Administrator Updates: Danielle noted that she had no further updates than the regular agenda items that had been dealt with.

There being no further business before the Board, Neal moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM. The motion was seconded by AI and passed by unanimous consent.

Signed:

Roger Manzolini, Chair