

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Wednesday June 28, 2023

Hybrid Meeting (Town Hall and Zoom)

Members Present: Al Hanson-Chair, Neal Pilson, Roger Manzoloni (arrived after meeting started)

Other Participants: Danielle Fillio-Town Administrator, , Tom Grizey-Sewer manager, Paul Green (Building/zoning inspector), Ernie Smith(ConCom Chair), Robert Bohlman , Robert Hammer, Roseanne Fieri, zoom participants, Holly & Dick Stover,

Chair Al Hanson opened the meeting at 6:00PM, stating who was present for the meeting.

1. Mr. Pilson made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 24,2023 meeting and the minutes from the June 14, 2023 minutes. His corrections had been included in the revised minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hanson and the motion passed.

2. Appointment of new Facilities Maintenance Personnel

Ms. Fillio introduced Robert Hammer , the candidate for Facilities Maintenance employee. Mr. Hanson asked him to tell the members a little bit about himself and his abilities as the new maintenance employee Mr. Hammer stated that he has done everything from gardening to wiring and worked in the maintenance department of the Berkshires Hills School district for the past two years. Ms. Fillio explained that she and Mr. Beckwith had a very detailed discussion with Mr. Hammer concerning his job description and its responsibilities. Mr. Manzoloni stated that they are hiring before the new building is completed so that he can learn and get familiar with all the inner workings of the new building. Ms. Stover asked about exactly what position he would be holding. Danielle stated that it is a joint position between facilities maintenance of the new building and highway laborer. Mr. Manzoloni made a motion to approve Mr. Hammer as the new town employee for facilities maintenance and highway laborer. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion; it passed unanimously by roll call vote.

3. Paul Greene-Update of Status of 159 Willow Road

Paul Greene stated that he has spoken with both Mr. Bohlman and Shep Evans(ConCom Agent). Mr. Greene stated that the issue for him is that Mr. Bohlman needs to apply for a building permit. The permit that Mr. Bohlman had gotten in 2002 was no longer valid. Since the property is considered a non-conforming lot, a new building permit cannot be issued without a variance from the ZBA. Mr. Greene stated that when he spoke with Mr. Evans, he was told that a permit from 2002 no longer met current wetland regulations so Mr. Evans would follow up on the Conservation Commission side of the issue, Mr. Greene stated he would follow up on the building permit side of the issue.

Mr. Bohlman spoke regarding his property stating that when he went before the ZBA, the members did a site visit, but since he did not have the proper paperwork for what the issues were so he was told that he would have to come back once he had the proper paperwork to bring before them. Mr. Bohlman stated that all issues with the Conservation Commission have now been cleared up. Ms. Fillio stated that Mr. Bohlman now needs to go before the ZBA for a special permit which is separate from the restoration order from the Conservation Commission. She encouraged him to work with a lawyer to help him file the

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correct Special Permit paperwork for his specific case. Once he has the correct paperwork and files for the special permit, she will contact Mr. Martin(ZBA Chair) and ask him to schedule a hearing.

Mr. Smith (ConCom Chair) spoke and stated that the ConCom has accepted the restoration plan and now it is up to the ZBA to follow through on the zoning issues.

Mr. Manzolini asked if there were any comments from members of the audience. Mr. Stover(ZBA board member) stated he spoke with Mr. Martin about the Bohlman property but could not discuss anything fully until the ZBA met as a full board. Mr. Bohlman stated that he will work with a lawyer and apply for a special permit. He thanked the Selectmen and Danielle. This ended the discussion on 159 Willow Road.

4.Town Center Discussion

Mr. Manzolini stated that the building was almost complete, the town hall side is further along than the library side. The lawn is greening up nicely. He stated that sometime in October is still the scheduled move in date. He also stated there were no items or invoices that required Board approval at this time.

5. Public Comment

Roseanne Fieri voiced her concerns regarding short term rentals that are creating issues in Richmond Shores. Her main concern was people renting homes and letting their dogs run free not leashed. She was chased back into her house by a dog. Mr. Pilson stated that the town is working on the issue of short-term rentals and one of the issues that will need to be dealt with is allowing dogs.

It was Suggested that Ms. Fieri call John Drake ,who is our animal control officer if you see a loose dog. Ms. Fieri stated that she has spoken with Mr. Drake, and he told her the dogs need to be leashed and if they are not, he does pick them up and brings them to the humane shelter for holding until the owner retrieves the dog. Ms. Stover suggested that a picture should be taken of the dog not being leashed as a record for Mr. Drake.

Ms. Fillio stated that the State has finally turned over to the names of the people who are renting their homes for short-term rental properties. There are a few other properties that were found during the search that was done last spring and they have been added to the list provided by the state. Danielle stated that now that there is a list, she will contact Paul Greene and work with him about making sure that the properties meet all building and safety standards required by town and state regulations. She stated that the town is getting the 4% rooms tax which is a fair amount of money.

Mr. Stover commended Mr. Pilson on his letter to the editor in the Eagle concerning people's safety issues about walking on the roads wearing dark non reflective clothing. Mr. Stover stated there was a discussion at the Richmond Pond Association meeting that people are swimming outside of the marked swimming areas without a swimming buoy or a person following in a kayak, which he feels is a very dangerous situation. He would like to have a blurb put in the next newsletter concerning this issue. Mr.

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Pilson stated that possibly Mr. Stover could write a letter to the Editor of the Eagle, he can't because they will only publish 1 a month from any person.

Mr. Smith asked the board members how they wished to move forward with hiring another Conservation Agent since Mr. Evans has retired. He stated that a job description is needed , a pay scale must be decided upon prior to advertising the position. Ms. Fillio stated that she will place an ad once a job description and pay scale is decided upon and suggested that Mr. Smith contact other communities as to what their needs are and what they pay. Mr. Smith stated he has a job description for the MACC, but it is for a full-time position, which is not what Richmond will be requiring. Mr. Pilson stated that Ms. Fillio and Mr. Smith should put together a job description to get the process moving forward.

6. Town Administrator Updates:

Ms. Fillio gave the following updates:

Town now has an upgraded Zoom account which provides a transcript and summary of the zoomed meetings. b. She has been working with Mr. Beckwith (DPW) on the storm water management grant and final reporting. Once completed there will be a town wide implementation plan for storm water management.

Next steps for the Municipal Aggregate Program the town passed at the May 2023 town meeting.is to post the Consultant agreement for the public to view for 30 days on the town website, to allow residents to review and ask questions about the plan. Once this is done then the consultants can go before the Department of Public Utilities with their submission of the plan that the town wants.

Potholes on Swamp Road have been filled.

The F-600 truck the town ordered 2 years ago has finally been received.

The newsletter will begin to do a monthly trial with email blasts about upcoming events more frequently to try to get move involvement as we are finding residents aren't necessarily reading it by-weekly. Danielle explained that the Town also advertises on their existing Facebook page after a suggestion was made for the Town to get a Facebook page.

The DOR does not allow towns to request or solicit donations on any town websites or sent out materials(such as a newsletter or email). It was suggested that the best way to get the message out for donations is through word of mouth. Ms. Fillio stated that the Friends of the Library are a nonprofit and can also accept donations.

7. Selectmen Matters

Mr. Manzolini stated he saw dead trees on Route 41 near the old school, near Pilgrim Street. Ms. Fillio stated she would have the tree warden, Adam Weinberg, look at them to decide if they are in the town right of way or private property.

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Mr. Pilson stated that he read a couple of interesting articles in the Berkshire Edge. One was about turning an old mechanic garage into an art gallery that should be discussed with the building going up for sale soon. The other was an article about leveling the digital playing field, it explained that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is working with senior citizens on getting them computer and digital media savvy. Ms. Fillio stated that Richmond had signed up for the with BRPC.

Mr. Hanson stated that the animal control officer, Mr. Drake, would like a badge that signifies that he is the Richmond Animal Control Officer. There was a discussion about how to get all employee badges. Danielle will look into what exists and what options there are.

8. Sewer Matters

Mr. Grizey stated that the person snow plowing the road in the shores plowed off all the gravel. This has exposed several of the sewer connections and clean out which if not recovered with gravel, then they will be broken off next year by the plows. Ms. Fillio stated that all the funds earmarked for the Shore roads has already been spent. Mr. Grizey stated that there might be enough money in the sewer maintenance budget to cover the cost of the gravel. He stated that Mr. Beckwith is aware of the issue.

More Public Comment Issues

Ms. Stover stated that she felt more money was needed for dead tree removal along the sides of the roads. She asked who is responsible for the school parking lot and driveway. Ms. Fillio stated the town has the responsibility of maintaining the school driveway and parking lot. She said that she attended a meeting of the Richmond Record, and it might go out of business due to lack of money. Ms. Stover stated that she has contacted the Boy’s Club about the eastern retention basin, and they have not gotten back to her, it is an erosion issue that needs to be fixed. She thanked the DPW for mowing the hill on Swamp Road but asked that they get the branches and large limbs that are along the road.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Manzolini made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 PM, it was seconded by Mr. Hanson and passed unanimously.

Mr. Hanson-Chair

Date

Mr. Pilson

Mr. Manzolini