

1 **Town of Richmond**
2 **Special Selectboard Meeting**
3 **Public Informational Meeting**
4 **Minutes of February 8, 2025**

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6 **Members Present:** Bard Hill, David Sander, Jay Furr, Lisa Miller

7
8 **Absent:** Adam Wood

9
10 **Staff Present:** Town Manager Josh Arneson; Assistant to the Town Manager Duncan
11 Wardwell; Administrative Assistant Linn Caroleo; Town Clerk Linda Parent; Finance
12 Director Connie Bona; Fire Department Chief Dennis Gile; Highway Department Chief
13 Pete Gosselin; Library Director Suzanne Krohn.

14
15 **Others Present:** MMCTV Erin Wagg, Fran Thomas Round Church, Suzanne Parent
16 OCCC, Rebecca Connell Planning Commission, John Michael Longworth COTS, Judy
17 Rosovsky Chair of Conservation Commission, Kathy Templin.

18
19 **MMCTV Video:** Recorded by MMCTV by Erin Wagg
20 <https://youtu.be/fgjDDb1KtYQ?si=ITUu-NRlOzgj30nb>

21
22 **Call to Order:** 10:00 am

23
24 **Welcome by:** Sander

25
26 **Public Comment:** Sander thanked Furr for bringing donuts.

27
28 **Additions or Deletions to Agenda:** None

29
30 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

31
32 **Budget presentation for the FY26**

33 Timestamp: 0:01

34
35 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/1_town_](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/1_town_warning_Jan_2025_signed.pdf)
36 [warning_Jan_2025_signed.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/1_town_warning_Jan_2025_signed.pdf)

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38 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a1_FY26_B](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a1_FY26_Budget_for_Town_Report.pdf)
39 [udget_for_Town_Report.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a1_FY26_Budget_for_Town_Report.pdf)

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41 [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.g](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a2_FY26_Budget_for_Town_Report.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
42 [ov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a2_FY26](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a2_FY26_Budget_for_Town_Report.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
43 [Budget for Town Report.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a2_FY26_Budget_for_Town_Report.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

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45 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a3_Budget](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a3_Budget_Notes_FINAL.pdf)
46 [Notes_FINAL.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a3_Budget_Notes_FINAL.pdf)

47 [https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a4_town_re](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a4_town_report_financial_information_FY2024_1-17-25.pdf)
48 [port_financial_information_FY2024_1-17-25.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2a4_town_report_financial_information_FY2024_1-17-25.pdf)

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50 [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.g](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a5_FY26)
51 [ov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a5_FY26](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a5_FY26)
52 [CAPITAL PLAN DRAFT 01-07-24.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.richmondvt.gov%2Ffileadmin%2Ffiles%2FSelectboard%2FMeetings%2F2025%2F01%2F2a5_FY26)

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54 People who participated in the discussion: Arneson, Hill, Sander, Furr, Bona, Thomas,
55 Miller, Parent, Connell, Longworth

56

57 Arneson presented the following slideshow as an overview of the budget. He explained
58 that this year the budget will be voted on by Australian Ballot.

59

60 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/02/2a6_FY2026
61 [Budget Presentation - 2-8-25.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/02/2a6_FY2026)

62

63 Because of the \$2 million in flood expenses from the July 2024 floods Arneson explained
64 that coming to a consensus regarding this year's budget has been a challenge. There will
65 be a tax increase this year that is impossible to offset. There are 9 allocations for social
66 services to be voted on by Australian ballot. Hill clarified that some of the Water
67 allocation is for water that is used for fire protection. Sander added that the Town does
68 the bonding, but the water/sewer users pay back that bond and that burden has never been
69 shifted to the taxpayers, which he feels is a common misconception. Bona also added that
70 there is a Bond Bank loan which covers 40% of the water tank, and there was also a gap
71 loan for 48% that has been paid off. Thomas wanted to know if there was any acrimony
72 between Richmond and Hinesburg over sharing the Police Chief, to which Hill replied
73 that by sharing the Chief it strengthens the relationship between the Towns. Arneson
74 stated that Chief Cambridge will officially start work for Richmond on Feb. 18th, 2025.
75 Furr stated that Richmond now has one officer and a canine.

76

77 Miller asked about the one part-time employee listed under Town Admin positions, which
78 Bona clarified was the assistant to the Town Clerk who works 12 hours per week.
79 Thomas wanted to know if education of the new Town Clerk was included in the salary
80 for the incoming Town Clerk, to which Arneson replied that this would be considered an
81 educational bonus, which has been done before in other departments and was a clever
82 idea. Miller continued that the results of the recent Audit should be included in the Town
83 report and she wondered if the 15% reserve should be explained more clearly on slide 36.
84 Thomas asked about the new fire truck purchase, which Hill and Furr stated has been
85 discussed at other budget meetings and has in fact been on the budget since 2023.

86

87 Hill mentioned the state of the Town Center building, which has a water leak in the
88 ceiling and caused several ceiling tiles to fall down this week. Bona explained that the
89 Capital Plan will be discussed at the next meeting, and she wishes more people from the
90 public would attend these meetings. Furr pointed out that there have so far been 7 Special
91 Selectboard meetings discussing the budget and very few people attend, regardless of if
92 there is pie or donuts on offer. Thomas feels a postcard in the mail would be better to
93 inform residents about planned budget meetings, not everyone is tech savvy. Parent said
94 they provide child-care and a dinner at the OCCC annual meeting to get more people to
95 attend. Connell concurred that offering childcare so young parents could attend
96 Selectboard or budget meetings would be useful; she continued by asking how social
97 services allocations will be listed on the ballot, which Arneson answered by showing a
98 sample ballot. He also demonstrated where the Town report is posted on the Town's
99 website and explained how much the tax increase is affected by passing or not passing

100 distinct items. Each social service allocation submitted a request, and each request is
101 linked to an explanatory letter under the Town report. Bona pointed out that the
102 Conservation Reserve Fund is a separate fund that would raise the municipal tax rate
103 (Article 8) and is a value that can be difficult to understand. Longworth pointed out that
104 his organization helps people who have difficulty finding housing in 17 different
105 municipalities across northern Vermont, including Richmond.

106

107

108 **Discussion of Article 8 Conservation Reserve Fund**

109 Timestamp: 1:39

110

111 People who participated in the discussion: Rosovsky, Hill

112

113 Rosovsky gave a presentation about what the Conservation Commission does and pointed
114 out that every dollar given to the commission results in nearly \$4 in conservation
115 performed around Richmond. Hill wanted to know what percentage of land in Richmond
116 is currently conserved, which Rosovsky thought was 21%.

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118

119 **Charitable Organizations Presentations**

120 Timestamp: 1:47

121

122 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c1_VFN_A
123 [ppropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c1_VFN_A)

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125 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c2_Age_We
126 [ll_Appropriation_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c2_Age_We)

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128 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c3_VTCIL
129 [Appropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c3_VTCIL)

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131 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c4_COTS
132 [Appropriation_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c4_COTS)

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134 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c5_OCCC
135 [Appropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c5_OCCC)

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137 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c6_STEPS
138 [Appropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c6_STEPS)

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140 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c7_Turning
141 [Point_Appropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c7_Turning)

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143 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c8_HOPE
144 [Works Appropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c8_HOPE)

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146 https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c9_Lund_A
147 [ppropriations_FY26.pdf](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Selectboard/Meetings/2025/01/2c9_Lund_A)

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150 People who participated in discussion: Sander, Arneson, Hill, Longworth, Furr, Parent
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152 Sander announced that this relates to Articles 9 through 17 on the ballot. Arneson read
153 each Article in turn. Hill mentioned that Age Well (Article 10) delivers Meals on Wheels
154 and is funded by the Older Americans Act from the federal government. Article 12 deals
155 with the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) and Longworth described that his
156 organization thanks for past contributions and that they are instrumental in offering
157 temporary housing to people in need and shelters for adults and children. Furr stated that
158 homelessness and opioid addiction is a big problem in Vermont. Longworth emphasized
159 that safety and minimizing risks to their residents is important. Article 13 relates to the
160 Our Community Cares Camp to which Parent described that her organization supports 55
161 children in Richmond and that federal funding is constantly being cut which is why she is
162 asking for funding from Richmond residents. No other organization was represented;
163 additional information about the remaining social services organizations can be found on
164 the Town's website.

165

166 **Adjourn**

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168 *Furr moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

169 *Roll Call Vote: Hill, Furr, Miller, Sander in favor. Motion approved.*

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172 **Meeting adjourned at: 10:17 am**

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174 **Chat file from Zoom: None**