

1 **Town of Richmond**  
2 **Special Selectboard Meeting**  
3 **Minutes of March 26, 2025**  
4

5 **Members Present:** Bard Hill, Jay Furr, David Sander, Caitlin Filkins, Adam Wood  
6

7 **Absent:** None  
8

9 **Staff Present:** Town Manager Josh Arneson; Assistant to the Town Manager Duncan  
10 Wardwell, Police Officer Matt Cohen (and Duke), Town Clerk Linda Parent.  
11

12 **Others Present:** MMCTV Erin Wagg, Hinesburg Selectboard members Michael Loner,  
13 Dennis Place, Paul Lamberson, Merily Lovell, Assistant Town Manager to Hinesburg Joy  
14 Dubin Grossman; Interim Police Chief in Hinesburg Frank Bryan; Jamie Valyou, Erin  
15 Farr, Frank Koss, Sarah Toscano, Natacha Liuzzi, Tony St. Hilaire, John Kingston, Tyler  
16 Sparks, Ruchel St. Hilaire, Jeanne Adams, Kathy Giroux, Matthew Cohen, Will  
17 MacKinnon, Joanne, Richard Bigue, Brittany Spence, Sarah and David, Kelsey Pasteris,  
18 Pam, Amy Cambridge, Joel and Laura, Adriana, mbrow, Catherine Moller, Noa, Paige  
19 Kaleita, Donna, Catherine Goldsmith, Donne, Connie Van Eeghen, Pete O'Neil, Brendan  
20 Filkins, Darren Kennedy, Mary's iPad, Judy McVickar, Kathleen Newton.  
21  
22

23 **MMCTV Video:** Recorded by MMCTV by Erin Wagg  
24 <https://youtu.be/aZxE7L7R67I?si=8nHfKuVX7TGYDRAN>  
25  
26

27 **Call to Order:** 7:00 p.m.  
28

29 **Welcome by:**  
30

31 Lovell welcomed everyone and stated that a change to the agenda would be an action  
32 item to appoint 2 members from each Selectboard to a task force in the search for a new  
33 shared Chief of Police.  
34

35 **Public Comment:**  
36

37 Toscano stated that her husband works in Law Enforcement and that former Chief  
38 Cambridge was well liked and that he was the victim of a smear campaign and should be  
39 reinstated. Liuzzi mentioned that former Chief Cambridge would like to meet with both  
40 Town's respective Selectboards and neither has responded to his request for such a  
41 meeting. Lovell responded that all communication with former Chief Cambridge has to  
42 go through his lawyer presently, which is causing a delay. Furr responded that the case  
43 regarding hiring Cambridge as Chief of Police is closed and not open for further  
44 discussion, and the Richmond Selectboard is only interested in discussing what lays  
45 ahead. Valyou emphasized that he thinks finding a Chief of Police is paramount to  
46 effective emergency services. Furr ended with adding the aforementioned action item to  
47 the agenda.  
48  
49

50 **Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present**

51

52 **Discussion of current agreements for shared police and police chief services**

53 Timestamp: 0:07

54

55 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Wood, Hill, Arneson, Lovell, Place,  
56 Lamberson, Farr, Bryan, Cohen, Sander, Valyou

57

58 Arneson explained that joint Police services between the two Towns started in 2023,  
59 when Richmond was losing police officers and needed help with coverage, as well as a  
60 Chief. Lovell stated that at the last Hinesburg Selectboard meeting it was unanimously  
61 voted to keep joint police services between the two Towns. Furr concurred that  
62 financially it is wise to continue with joint services. He asked that others chime in with  
63 their thoughts. Hill added that he feels shared policing will lower costs and add quality  
64 and access to police services for both Towns. Lamberson dittoed by saying he is grateful  
65 that the two Towns are willing to work together like this. Furr stated that the previous  
66 arrangement made a lot of sense because Hinesburg has a sally port and larger  
67 headquarters, which Lovell agreed with, saying that's why it makes sense to have the  
68 headquarters in Hinesburg. Place queried how long this arrangement is intended to last,  
69 since Richmond continues to look for its own police officers. Arneson added that this is a  
70 new starting point since Richmond will take over the Chief of Police hiring, while  
71 Hinesburg will be leasing that Chief; ideally both Towns would collectively have 8-9  
72 officers to cover both. Hill added that Richmond is in a bit of a pickle due to the  
73 collective bargaining agreement. Wood said he hopes both Towns find a comfortable  
74 number of officers budget-wise, so that there is a balance of the number of officers hired  
75 in each Town versus the way it is now. Farr asked what the ideal number of officers for  
76 each Town would be? Hill stated it's more important to keep in mind how many officers  
77 each Town budgeted for in the next year. Furr added that a one-year contract is  
78 insufficient. Bryan doesn't think the Towns have reached an ideal working relationship  
79 yet, in terms of shared police governance. Cohen agreed that optimal conditions and  
80 maximum benefits have not been achieved because there is only one police officer (and  
81 his dog) in Richmond. Both officers feel an ideal should be decided on and worked  
82 toward. Lamberson noted that it was still not possible to fully staff both Towns despite  
83 the previous collaboration agreement. Sander added that it is hard to hire young officers  
84 and attract them to small Towns such as Richmond and Hinesburg because the options  
85 for upward movement in the department is lacking, compared to other larger Towns. Hill  
86 said that quality of life for a Police officer in Hinesburg and Richmond is better than  
87 other places. Valyou feels the items being discussed is something a qualified Chief of  
88 Police should take care of, not individual Selectboard members.

89

90

91 **Discussion of options for structure of shared police and police chief services going  
92 forward**

93 Timestamp: 0:29

94

95 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Koss, Cohen, Arneson, Filkins, Lamberson,  
96 St. Hilaire, Wood, Hill, Valyou

97

98 Koss feels that a plan for moving forward is lacking, even if a Chief is hired there is no  
99 clear path. Cohen gave a comprehensive presentation summarizing what he has seen

100 while being a corporal in the Richmond Police Department, as well as suggestions and  
101 ideas for moving forward. He showed that the Towns are closely matched in terms of  
102 sizes and budgets. He pointed out that contracts, trainings, pay and paid days off are not  
103 aligned between the two Towns, which he feels could lead to jealousy or indifference in  
104 governance. Filkins asked if such jealousy has occurred under the previous shared  
105 policing arrangement, which Cohen replied he has not seen this, but he wanted to present  
106 it as a possible pitfall. Arneson added that Richmond police are unionized and the pay is  
107 a bit higher, where Hinesburg is not unionized. Cohen thinks one larger department might  
108 be more logical. Hill and Wood think that would create a separate governance body,  
109 dissolving one Town's police force. Lamberson said he does not want the two Town's  
110 Police departments to develop into the currently dysfunctional Burlington Police. St.  
111 Hilaire, who has experience in negotiating contracts for Police officers, concurred with  
112 previous statements regarding young Police officers going to larger districts to advance  
113 their careers, adding that they go where the money and better benefits are. Cohen  
114 continued stating that for full-time coverage in both Towns a total of 15 officers would be  
115 needed. Farr asked what the predicted growth of Hinesburg might be in terms of  
116 residents, in comparison to Richmond's growth which is considerably slower. Cohen  
117 responded that he thinks both Towns are growing toward an eventual need for 24/7  
118 policing. Wood thinks the disparity between the Towns may widen, with Hinesburg  
119 seeing more rapid growth. Cohen pointed out that in terms of population Hinesburg has  
120 53% and Richmond 47%. Lovell mentioned that under the previous contract a goal had  
121 been to create a Grand Unified Municipal District, akin to what the Chittenden County  
122 Waste District is doing, something she no longer is keen to pursue. Wood wonders if the  
123 end goal needs to be decided first, then figure out how to reach that goal. Hill said  
124 figuring out what both Towns want looking ahead, say in 2027 may be wise, keeping in  
125 mind that the legislature may change before that time. Furr and Wood gave kudos to  
126 Cohen for creating such a presentation and thinking forward. Cohen feels the Towns need  
127 to determine how do the two Town's want to be policed and then work toward that.  
128 Filkins concurred. Valyou strongly feels that many of the things discussed and decided on  
129 by the Selectboard should fall to the future Chief of Police who will be a professional  
130 adept at answering many of these questions; similarly, a committee should be created  
131 encompassing people who are knowledgeable regarding hiring practices for Police  
132 departments. Lovell pushed back and stated that the Selectboards' collectively are  
133 governing bodies and can make such decisions, and she likes the idea of creating a vision  
134 of what sort of policing both Town's want. Koss strongly feels that both Towns need to  
135 make some decisions and move forward with purpose.

136  
137

### 138 **Discussion of hiring a police chief to serve for both Richmond and Hinesburg**

139 Timestamp: 1:32

140

141 People who participated in discussion: Furr, Lamberson, Cohen, Lovell, Bryan, Kingston,  
142 Farr, Arneson, Sparks, Loner, Hill

143

144 Lamberson feels the current arrangement with an interim Chief and five officers for both  
145 Towns is working. Wood added that finding a "perfect" Chief is more important than  
146 expediency. Lovell hopes the members of the new hiring committee will create a process  
147 with which to hire an appropriate chief. Cohen added that stability is key right now after  
148 the recent upheaval. Bryan said it's hard to hire officers if they don't know what job they  
149 are going to do and if it will be there for them after a year. He desperately needs more

150 officers in uniform heading into the busy spring and summer seasons. Kingston feels the  
151 basic structure of the shared Policing agreement is an important determination to make.  
152 Farr said she hears expedience as an overarching theme for both Towns. Arneson pointed  
153 out that the previous job description included the idea of moving toward shared Police  
154 services with Hinesburg, now two years later the vision of shared Policing is clearer and  
155 that would drive the job description. Valyou suggested in the short term to have an acting  
156 Chief in each Town's police department who work together. Sparks suggested having just  
157 one department and having officers on-call for the Town that doesn't have a Police  
158 department. Loner emphasized the importance of hiring a chief that understands he will  
159 be working with both Town's and to make that clear from the start. Hill emphasized the  
160 importance of keeping in mind short-term versus long-term needs and goals.

161

162 David Sander and Bard Hill were previously voted to be on the special hiring committee.

163

164 *Lovell moved to appoint Mike Loner and Dennis Place to be part of the special hiring*  
165 *committee to explore collaboration in policing. Lamberson seconded.*

166 *Roll Call Vote: Lovell, Loner, Place, Lamberson, Dubin Grossman in favor. Motion*  
167 *approved.*

168

169 St. Hilaire (Ruchel) feels the Town's culture in Hinesburg should be looked at.

170

171 Arneson described that the committee would encompass two Selectboard members from  
172 each Town, the Town Managers from each Town, also Former Chief of Police in  
173 Hinesburg Frank Koss.

174

175 *Sander moved to add Corporal Matt Cohen to the hiring committee. Filkins seconded.*

176 *Roll Call Vote: Furr, Hill, Filkins, Sander, Wood in favor. Motion approved.*

177

178 *Lovell moved to add Matt Bryan acting Chief in Hinesburg to the committee. Lamberson*  
179 *seconded.*

180 *Roll Call Vote: Lovell, Loner, Place, Lamberson, Dubin Grossman in favor. Motion*  
181 *approved.*

182

183 The Town Managers will set up a time to meet for the new committee members.

184 Lamberson wanted to give kudos to the officers who are working for the two Towns  
185 presently. Filkins, Furr and Lovell seconded those kudos.

186

187

188 **Adjourn**

189

190 *Sander moved to adjourn. Hill seconded.*

191 *Roll Call Vote: Furr abstain. Hill, Miller, Sander, Furr, Wood in favor. Motion*  
192 *approved.*

193

194 *Lovell moved to adjourn. Lamberson seconded.*

195 *Roll Call Vote: Lovell, Loner, Place, Lamberson, Dubin Grossman in favor. Motion*  
196 *approved.*

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198 **Meeting adjourned at: 8:53 p.m.**

199

200

201 **Chat file from Zoom:**

202

203 Catherine Goldsmith

204 01:14:36

205 Hinesburg is looking towards 400 dwelling units not houses. This includes units within  
206 group senior housing.

207

208 Catherine Goldsmith

209 01:33:02

210 Fyi- the Deborah Rawson Library serves Jericho and Underhill and is also a municipal  
211 taxing unit.

212