

BOARD OF SELECTMEN VIRTUAL MEETING

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 – 6:00 PM – via Zoom

PRESENT: Alan Hanson, Chair; Neal Pilson, Selectman; Roger Manzoloni, Selectman; Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator; Peter Beckwith, Highway Superintendent; Steve Parsons, Cemetery Superintendent Elizabeth Goodman, Atty.; Ed Fechner; Peter Williams; Ron Veillette, Con. Com.; Christian Hanson, Balderdash Cellars; Peter Williams

Al opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with a reading of the Governor's Directive concerning changes to the Open Meeting Laws during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Peter Williams - Richmond Cemetery Plot Enhancement Request: Peter came before the Board to request permission to restore his family's 19th century burial plot in Center Cemetery. The Eleazer Williams family settled in Richmond in 1802 and played a major role in the town for many years. The plot, which is located very near the main entrance, has fallen into disrepair and Peter would like to restore it to its original condition.

The plot was originally bordered by posts, which were connected by chains to delineate the area. The proposal he is putting forward includes cleaning of all the stones, replacement of the missing posts, replacement of the missing or damaged hardware and the chain. The replacement chain will be removable to facilitate maintenance of the grounds. The ground cover will be replaced with a low-maintenance and historically accurate product. The team Peter has put together to accomplish this work includes Ted Andrews, a Real Estate Science expert and William Remsen, a Certified Preservation Architect.

Roger expressed his gratitude to Peter for taking on this project and restoring the plot. Steve asked how maintenance will be achieved given the chains that will surround the plot. Peter responded that the family will be responsible for maintenance of the plot inside the chained area.

Roger moved to approve the proposal for the restoration of the Williams family plot. Alan seconded the motion, which was carried by unanimous vote.

Draft Cable Franchise Agreement for Submission to Charter: Neal provided a short background and noted that the existing agreement we have with the current provider has expired, but there is a continuation of that contract until a new arrangement is agreed upon.

Discussion included a comment by Ed Fechner that, given the rapid development of new technologies, a proposed ten-year contract should include any such advancements. (See updated agreement, attached)

Roger and Al both noted their agreement with the highlighted portions of the draft, but Roger asked that an addition be made to the Non-Discrimination Clause to indicate that discrimination based on organizational affiliation or political or ideological views will not be permitted. Discussion included

comments by the Town Attorney who cautioned that the wording would have to be very carefully drafted and that the situations Roger was trying to avoid were all covered in First Amendment guarantees. That assurance satisfied Roger's concerns.

Ron asked whether that ten-year contract with Charter would eliminate the possibility of the new phone company in Richmond seeking an agreement to supply phone and/or internet service. He was assured by Elizabeth that the agreement with Charter is specifically non-exclusionary.

A motion was made to approve the draft agreement for presentation to Charter. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous vote.

Approval of Chapter 90 Reimbursement Request and Snow Removal Guidelines: (See Attached) The Board members having had sufficient time to review the guidelines for snow removal, a request was made for two minor changes in the wording, after which Roger moved to approve the amended Guidelines. The motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote. Neal suggested that the Guidelines be posted on the Town's website and attached to these minutes. He also thought perhaps the Richmond Record could be asked to publish it.

Danielle then asked the Board to approve the \$62,825.00 reimbursement from the Small Bridge Grant. Roger so moved, Neal seconded the motion and it was passed by unanimous vote.

Continuation of Balderdash Special Permit Amendment: Danielle reported that the final draft of the proposed amendment was only provided to residents early this morning. Peter Muller asked that, since the new version was only lately received, could the Board continue the discussion to the next meeting to give people time to review it. The Board members agreed that it would be right and proper to do so.

Neal moved to reopen the public hearing so that any discussion from the public could be heard at this time. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. Comments included wording concerning the barn doors and the duration of the Permit. A final draft will be sent by Elizabeth to Danielle in good time for distribution to all interested parties. Neal moved that the hearing be continued by the February 24, 2021 meeting of the Board. The motion was seconded and adopted by unanimous vote.

Green Burials – Regulations and Fees: (see attached) Danielle reported that in her research into existing burial regulations for Richmond, she was unable to find any that had been approved or any mention thereof in minutes.

In a discussion of whether the Town will adopt the State's "Recommendation" that all green burials receive the approval of the Board of Health it was pointed out the purpose of green burials is to lay the body to rest within 48 hours of decease. There is no way the family could obtain approval from the Board of Health within that time span.

Roger asked that the Board review the draft presented to it and access the links embedded in the draft so that they can be clear about the State's regulations. They will each then suggest such changes in the wording as they see reasonable and forward those to Danielle. Further discussion was deferred to the

next meeting, once Danielle has had an opportunity to make the proposed changes and distribute the revised Regulations.

Quiet Signs for Town Properties: Danielle uploaded the quote and the samples of the signs for the Board's approval. There was a discussion of which of two options the Board members preferred and where the signs should be placed. A choice was made to use the sign that incorporates the Town Seal, but to reduce the number of signs ordered from 10 to 5. Danielle will get a new quote.

Assessors "Tax Map" Contract: The annual contract with the producers of the maps is expiring. Danielle asked the Board to approve the \$1,900.00 contract for the coming year. Neal moved to approve renewal of the contract. He was seconded by Al and the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

Public Comment: Al opened the floor to the public for any comment or discussion. Ron asked if the town is considering moving to an electronic signing system for documents to save the time required for multiple signers to come to Town Hall.

The discussion resulted in the consensus that the issue is worth looking into but at a later time, given that the Budget season is now under way.

Ron noted that in an attempt to research existing permits and other documents, he found that they were not retrievable in the current system. He suggested having the Town's data digitized for more secure referencing in the future. Danielle is looking into obtaining a grant for that purpose. A discussion ensued about where old files and documents have been stored, but the decision to do that research was deferred to after the May Town Meeting.

Ron reported that a colleague of his is working on a History of the Conservation Commission, for which he needs access to old Minutes and other documents. Al suggested that he use a camera to take photographs of the documents and Danielle said she was willing to make copies for him which he can remove from Town Hall.

Selectmen's Matters: Roger observed that he did not see the Minutes from the January 20, 2021 meeting. Danielle said she would get them forwarded.

There being no further business before the Board, Al moved that the meeting be adjourned. Neal seconded the motion, which was adopted by unanimous consent.

Signed:

Alan Hanson, Chair