

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN / SEWER COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

**Wednesday February 12, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Richmond Town Hal, 1529 State Road**

**PRESENT:** Mr. Roger Manzolini, Chair; Mr. Neal Pilson, Selectman; Mr. Alan Hanson, Selectman; Ms. Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator

**ABSENT:**

**GUEST:** Mr. Peter Beckwith, Highway Superintendent; Chief Steve Traver, Fire Dept. Chief; Ms. Alison Dickson, Housatonic Valley Assn. Outreach Mgr.

Mr. Manzolini called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Review and Approval of the Minutes of January 22, 2020:** Mr. Manzolini moved that the minutes of the January 22, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen be approved as read. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**Housatonic Valley Assn. (HVA) – Update for Stream Crossings in Richmond:** Ms. Dickson approached the Board with an update and the next steps of a project that the Association has been working on. In 2015 the HVA received funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Assn. intended to assess stream crossings in various communities. One of the concerns with road/stream crossings is how it allows organisms to move up and down the stream corridor and the effect of climate change. The finding is that many of the culverts are not large enough to pass aquatic organisms and not large enough to pass the volume of water and debris that is being moved. Consequently, they are failing.

HVA has developed a “Road/Stream Crossing Assessment” for flood resilience and fish-friendliness. The goal is to produce an inventory of all the crossings, both public and private in each town. What is happening upstream can impact down-stream, so it is best to have a full picture. Data is being collected and there is about a week or less left to be done.

Mr. Manzolini asked how the work being done by HVA ties into the road mapping that Mr. Beckwith is doing. Mr. Beckwith explained that they are going to map all the various towns’ stream crossings and produce a prioritized list, which he should be able to add to the mapping of road assessments.

Ms. Dickson explained the steps this Assessment by the HVA will follow: Step One-A paper document showing all the data from an online file will be received, likely before the end of June. Step Two-The data is delivered to the University of Connecticut, where they will do their flood-risk analysis, which will take about a month. Hopefully, before the end of the summer (August) the Town will have a Draft document. Step Three-to get key stakeholders together (Mr. Beckwith, members of the Select-board, a member of the Conservation Commission and community members) to look at the culverts that have been put at the top of the list as

priorities and see how they overlap with what the community already knows are problem culverts. The goal is that out of that prioritized list that contains both data analysis and community input, one structure will be chosen by the community to have a preliminary design created to address the concerns associated with it. Ms. Fillio was named the contact person for Richmond.

Ms. Dickson advised the Board that the State has developed a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning process and asked if the Town has considered applying for that program, which deals with a town's preparedness to deal with climate change. Once that Plan is in place, there are Action Grants available to do the work needed to increase the Town's state of preparation.

There was a discussion of several specific locations and whether they will be included in the study. In some cases, the item mentioned is in Pittsfield and is not, therefore, included in the Richmond study. The Board thanked Ms. Dickson for the information.

**1974 Swamp Road – Chapter 61A Program:** The Town has right of first refusal of the property. The property owners' attorney is requesting that the 1.286 acres in question be removed from the 61A program in order to install a required septic system in that area. Removing the plot from 61A would return it to full taxability. There was a discussion as to whether the Town was interested in obtaining the plot, which resulted in a consensus that there was no such interest.

Mr. Manzolini moved that the Board waive its right of first refusal and indicate its lack of interest in obtaining the land. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion on the table, which was adopted by unanimous vote.

**Discussion of Constable and Ability to Respond to Calls:** Mr. Pilson reminded the Board that the question was whether there was any insurance coverage for response to emergencies by Town Constables. Ms. Fillio said that constables do not have the legal right to direct traffic at an emergency. Constables are not police officers. If the person is a flagger, then he can do detail work, but he cannot respond to any kind of emergency or accident to direct traffic. The only thing a Constable or Flagger is allowed to do is to be a Detail Officer if he is called on to do so by Chief Bullett or the State Police. Whether or not the Town is liable for allowing him to be a flagger on a detail, is a question Ms. Fillio has not yet received confirmation on.

Chief Traver said that he has been in contact with West Stockbridge's Police Department and they are more than willing to respond to an emergency in Richmond whenever asked to do so.

**Appointment of New Library Trustee:** The Richmond Free Public Library voted to appoint Ms. Katherine Keenum to replace Lisa Donfried as Library Trustee. Mr. Manzolini moved that the Board appoint Ms. Keenum to the position of Library Trustee. He was seconded by Mr. Pilson and the motion passed by unanimous consent.

**Appointment of Temporary Treasurer/Collector:** Ms. Fillio said that Ms. Amy Lane was the Treasurer in Richmond in the past and is currently the Accountant for Lanesborough and used

to work for SoftWrite, which is the software we use. Ms. Fillio asked the Board to appoint Ms. Lane as temporary Treasurer/Collector while Mr. Lisi is out on medical leave.

Mr. Pilson moved that the Board appoint Ms. Amy Lane as a temporary Treasurer/Collector for the Town of Richmond until such time as the permanent Treasurer/Collector returns to work. He was seconded by Mr. Alan Hanson and the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.

**Mass. Legislative Breakfasts:** Ms. Fillio asked if any of the Selectmen would like to attend the event. Mr. Pilson will be out of town at that time. Mr. Manzolini plans to attend, but Mr. Hanson was unsure of his availability. Ms. Fillio will make the reservation for Mr. Manzolini and Mr. Hanson will let Ms. Fillio know.

**Cable License up for Renewal:** A letter was received from the State Dept. of Telecommunications and Cable (see attached). Mr. Pilson, as Co-Chair of the Cable Advisory Committee, provided the history of this issue.

The Committee has been in contact with Charter, the cable provider, and the person in charge of discussions with various towns in Western Mass. He will only come out from Worcester to meet with all the five towns of the consortium in the area. Richmond is not a member of that body. The letter indicates that the Town needs to complete its ascertainment discussions within six months of this letter, which is January 6, 2020. Those discussions can be held independent of any meeting with the cable company as it is basically to determine a "wish list" of equipment and services that the Town would like to have included in the next franchise agreement.

Mr. Pilson said that copies of that letter will be distributed to the members of the Cable Advisory Committee and a meeting of that body will be scheduled within the next 30 to 60 days to begin the ascertainment process and continue to press Charter for a meeting with their representative. There was a discussion of exactly what would be included in that ascertainment process, which included televising Town meetings and creating a student operated T.V. studio at the Richmond Consolidated School.

**Mail/Sign Warrants:** Warrants were duly signed.

**Sewer Matters:** There were no issues to be discussed.

**Town Administrator Report:** Mr. Manzolini suggested that during this budget period, the Board should be thinking about increasing Ms. Fillio's salary and making room in the budget for that. Mr. Pilson agreed that the Board should have that discussion during the budget process.

Ms. Fillio reported that she and Mr. Beckwith have been discussing creating a Stabilization Account for highway equipment so that money could begin to be put aside for future needs.

Ms. Fillio reminded the Board that there has been some discussion about adding a playground to the Town Beach, which could make the Beach more useful. There was also some question of obtaining a grant from the State to do some repairs along the shoreline. Along that stretch,

which is where the lifeguards' access is to the water, the rocks that line that area are starting to separate and create a danger.

Mr. Beckwith has advised Ms. Fillio to budget \$40,000.00 for tree-removal.

The School has not yet submitted its budget, but they have asked about repaving the parking lot. Ms. Fillio looked into the cost and determined that an overlay would be the most cost-effective to give us a few additional years. That Article has not yet been returned.

Ms. Fillio is still waiting for Mr. Peter Dillon to give her the information she needs to fix the heating system at the School.

Ms. Fillio would like to reallocate the money that was voted on to do the HVAC system for the School. The wording of the Article was to spend that money on a full HVAC unit, which only costs about \$20,000.00. However, there is a full upgrade that must happen in order to make that work and because the wording of the Article is so specific, she cannot use the money available for the upgrade. What needs to happen is that the wording of the Article must be changed and included in this year's Town Meeting Warrant.

The Building Committee has to determine if they will be ready to present their findings at the Town Meeting in May. At their next meeting on February 24<sup>th</sup> they are going to provide the information to Ms. Fillio that she will need to go to fiscal advisors. The Fiscal Advisor has agreed to come to Richmond to go over all the funding options. Ms. Fillio asked at which meeting the Board would prefer to have that discussion. The members of the Board thought it most appropriate to have that conversation with a combined meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Advisory Committee, with the Chair of the Library Committee in attendance once the Building Committee is able to provide a definite number.

Mr. Manzolini reported that he has looked at the Town Garage and found that it was coming along very well – both design and workmanship have been excellent. It remains to be decided what will be done with the roof – perhaps budget for a metal roof in the future.

**Selectmen's Matters:** Mr. Hanson spoke about the issue of insurance coverage for first responders coming from Pittsfield. Mr. Pilson said he believed that the responders to a call from the Fire Department or the Ambulance Department would automatically be covered by the Town's insurance. Ms. Fillio will check with the Town's Council.

**Next Board of Selectmen Meeting Dates: February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup>:** Mr. Pilson will be away for the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Both Mr. Hanson and Mr. Manzolini will be available for the Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. Both dates will also have a 5:00 PM Budget Advisory Meeting prior to the BOS 6:00 PM meeting.

February 19<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 7:00 PM is a Budget Advisory Cte. meeting. Mr. Manzolini will be absent at that time.

Ms. Fillio reminded the Board of the issue with the sign that the Audubon Society wanted to post at one of their sanctuaries but could not get approval. Mr. Greene advised Ms. Fillio that he had tried to reach the Society and walk them through the process, and Ms. Fillio has tried calling them twice, but response time is very slow. Ms. Fillio is trying to determine who is creating the sign for the Society as it is usually the vendor who applies for the permit.

As there was no further business before the Board, A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pilson and adopted by unanimous approval.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM

Signed:

---

Mr. Roger Manzolini, Chair