



Richmond Community Alliance
Encouraging constructive community engagement and action

NEWSLETTER

No. 17 May 19, 2024

Peaks

Richmond Community Alliance Summer Solstice Cookout Fundraiser

On June 20, RCA is hosting a summer solstice cookout fundraiser from 6:00–9:00 pm at Alaina's Ale House (343 Kingstown Road). Stop by to learn more about Richmond Community Alliance, chat with the steering committee, and share your thoughts on what is important to you when considering candidates for the upcoming election. The menu will be burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, fries and salad. Tickets \$35 per person click to purchase - <https://donorbox.org/events/609431> We will also have a basket-affle. Can't make it? You can still donate <https://donorbox.org/the-richmond-community-alliance>

Increased Benefits to Town Employees

The Town Council approved an increased dental benefit for non-police employees to bring them on par with police department employees. Although the better coverage is more expensive, the employee co-share for dental coverage will increase from 15% to 20%. The cost increase to the town for this year will be a bit under \$4,900 that will be paid from the wage contingency line already in the proposed budget.

Valleys

Chariho Bond Referendum Defeated

Voters defeated the Chariho bond question by 76 votes (Approve 2,369-Reject 2,445). In Richmond the vote was virtually evenly split (Approve 801-Reject 804). Hopkinton overwhelmingly defeated the question while Charlestown overwhelmingly voted to approve. The School Committee is now considering a \$15 million bond to fund necessary repairs on the Chariho main campus to put before voters in November. Also a plan will be developed for repairs at the elementary schools that will need to be approved by the R.I. Dept of Education before being presented to voters at a later date.

Councilor Comments Divide Rather Than Unite Community

During discussion of the proposed Municipal Court ordinance Councilor Colasante raised concerns that if a municipal court existed someone with an expensive Mercedes-Benz coming in from New York could take up residence in Richmond then file a complaint if they had a problem with their neighbor who has been living here for a long time and happens to be making an extra buck as a firewood cutter. We agree with the sentiments of Councilor Nassaney that “if you are breaking our ordinances, you should be held accountable.” Having a municipal court will make enforcement easier and more cost effective for the town. Claiming newcomers from out of town are a problem is concerning. After the divisive debate over the school bond, councilors should be trying to unite the community rather than divide it.

Other Items of Note

Town Budget Goes to Public Vote June 3

At their May 9 meeting, the Town Council unanimously approved the budget to be considered by voters on June 3. Municipal expenses are up 2.83% with the biggest driver being a 3.3% increase in personnel expenses. Capital expenses are decreasing 0.5% and debt service is decreasing by 1.8%. The increase in expenses will be offset by an increase in tax revenue from residential properties due to new construction and improvements. Under the proposed budget the tax rate is anticipated to decrease by ten cents to \$14.66 per thousand dollars of assessed value. Polls will be open at Town Hall on June 3rd from 8am - 8pm for the budget referendum.

Upcoming Meetings

May 21 – Town Council – 5 pm executive session and 6 pm regular meeting at Town Hall

May 21 – School Committee Special Meeting – 5 pm at Chariho High School Library

May 28 – Planning Board Meeting – 6:30 pm at Town Hall

June 3 – Municipal Budget Referendum 8 am – 8 pm at Town Hall

Town Council and Planning Board agendas: <https://clerkshq.com/richmond-ri>

School Committee agendas: https://www.chariho.k12.ri.us/school_committee/meeting_schedule

Community Calendar

Maddie Potts Foundation 1st Annual Car Show Saturday May 25 noon-2pm Chariho High School - Food by Mike's City Dogs, Music by Cruisin Bruce & Del's; Free admission, \$20 to enter car or tractor. <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=742343261444217>

Hope Valley Memorial Day Parade Sunday May 26 2pm – Main St from Hope Valley Fire Station to Chariho Plaza

Carolina Memorial Day Parade Monday May 27 9am – Richmond Townhouse Rd/Carolina Main St from Fire Station to St Mary’s Church

Richmond Recreation Summer Camp 2023

Registration is now open! Camp runs from June 26 to July 28, 9am – 3 pm and is open to Richmond and non-Richmond residents in K-7th grade. Sign up at:

<http://richmondri.com/166/Recreation>

Future Ideas

We would like to spotlight local businesses, people, and points of interest in our area in future newsletters. If you have an idea for a person/place to feature, or an event to include on the community calendar, feel free to email us at rca4richmond@gmail.com. We also welcome any tips or items of concern that you wish to bring to our attention.