



# **NEWSLETTER**

No. 4 November 5, 2023

## **Peaks**

### ***Dog Park Grand Opening***

The official grand opening of Richmond’s new dog park was held on November 4. This was the culmination of a multi-year effort by the dog park committee. We outlined the process behind getting this done in our second newsletter, which can be found in the newsletter archive on our website [www.richmondcommunityalliance.com](http://www.richmondcommunityalliance.com). Many residents and their 4-legged friends attended, including several elected officials. As was said on social media, dogs don’t care about party affiliation, they just want to play.



### ***RCA Personal Care & Toiletries Drive***

Stay tuned for more details on our first-ever RCA personal care/toiletries drive. Many organizations are collecting food for those in need, so RCA thought a good complement to that would be to collect personal care products and toiletries. Some of these items are more expensive than food, and SNAP benefits cannot be used to purchase them. We will be holding a collection on November 18 from 10:00 am to noon – location TBA. All donations will go to RICAN.

## **Opinion Corner**

*The New, Local, Anti-Government Campaign*

By Jeff Noble

No Town Council meeting this week means that we are lacking in our typical drama in Richmond. But fear not, dear readers... The president of The Forgotten Taxpayers along with a distinguished member of the Richmond Town Council decided to spice things up. These two individuals voluntarily appeared on the “In the Dugout..with Mike Stenhouse” podcast. Needless to say, it was a provocative presentation.

One detail I noticed was the new slogan for their upcoming campaign against all local budgets for next fiscal year. “Unrig” is the new marching drumbeat. The premise being, the system is “rigged” against the taxpayer/conservative; therefore, all budgets must be defeated and any elected officials that support the budget must be ousted. Only then will taxpayer utopia be achieved. Schools will perform at their highest level ever, all potholes will be filled, and Richmond’s tax burden will fall to the second lowest in the U.S.A.

The president of The Forgotten Taxpayers has actually used this line before. It is quite upsetting to her that the Chariho Act allows for three opportunities to pass a budget, and has argued this point on many occasions. The teacher union negotiations were also called “rigged.” Town and school administrators “rig” their budgets for nefarious reasons. It seems that any public policy implemented that The Forgotten Taxpayers doesn’t like is “rigged.” It’s rigged, yet the group never offers any constructive alternatives or works productively with others. It’s an all or nothing proposition for them.

What is needed in our town is well thought out public policy that is created within our frame of government. That’s what the RCA stands for. It wants to work for the strategic vision in our Comprehensive Plan to create a sound community. If change is needed, let it come slowly and methodically so that it is effective, efficient and beneficial to everyone.

## **Other Items of Note**

### ***Genesis of a stop sign***

There have been some questions on social media about the recent addition of stop signs at the intersection of Baker Pines and Carolina Nooseneck Road, making it a 3-way stop. Some have questioned whether the decision was just a random idea or whether it was a knee jerk reaction to a complaining resident. Believe it or not, there is a comprehensive process that must be followed before a stop sign is installed. A list of where stop signs exist is set forth in Richmond Town Ordinance 10.06, therefore in order to place a stop sign at a new location, the ordinance must be

amended. The process begins with a resident or town employee raising a concern or making the request. Then the area is reviewed by DPW, the police department, and Town Council members to gather information. The request is then placed on a Town Council agenda for discussion on whether to hold a public hearing on the proposal. If the council declines to schedule a public hearing the request dies. If the proposal goes to public hearing, the council votes whether to approve the request after hearing public comment.

That process is what took place with the Baker Pines/Carolina Nooseneck intersection. A resident who has lived near the intersection since 2017 raised concerns. At the August 15 Town Council meeting the Police Chief presented the request to add the stop signs. The resident appeared and expressed the concerns they had with speed and several accidents, and the fact that there is a bus stop in that location. Chief Johnson indicated that the intersection involved a 90-degree turn from Carolina Nooseneck onto Baker Pines, so it is difficult to navigate the corner even at the 25 mph speed limit. He told the council that according to the department's data there had been 2-3 accidents each year with vehicles leaving the roadway. A speed survey using the department's digital sign registered speeds up to 50 mph, and that there were about 700 vehicles per day going through the area in each direction. The Chief acknowledged that although vehicles may not stop, the sign will cause them to slow down so they can navigate the corner safely. Also, the DPW surveyed the area and cut back vegetation to improve visibility. Based upon this information the council voted to conduct a public hearing on adding the stop signs to the intersection.

The public hearing was conducted at the September 5 Town Council meeting. Councilor Colasante shared his experiences with vehicles traveling at high speed while he was running on the road in this area. Councilor Wilcox stated that she heard from a resident on Baker Pines they were concerned with speeding on Baker Pines. Another resident shared his experience walking on the road and witnessing accidents. Chief Johnson restated the information that had been collected on accidents on the corner and the benefit of getting vehicles to slow down and navigate it safely. Also, as part of the hearing the resident that made the initial request appeared and referred to the multiple accidents they had witnessed and that there is a bus stop on the corner. She thanked the council and Chief for responding to her concerns.

The Town Council then voted unanimously to approve placement of the stop signs at the intersection. Although this may seem like a minor issue, it is a good example of how town government can work for the better of its citizens. The agenda for the Town Council on Tuesday (11/7) includes a discussion on whether to hold a public hearing on a proposal to make the intersection of Hillsdale Road, Bell Schoolhouse Road and Tug Hollow Rd a 3-way stop.

### ***RCA website is live***

Check out the Richmond Community Alliance website [www.richmondcommunityalliance.com](http://www.richmondcommunityalliance.com) to learn more about the members of our steering committee and view past editions of the newsletter. Thank you to our 157 Facebook followers, 113 newsletter subscribers, and those that have donated. If you like what RCA is doing, please share our information with others. The 2024 election is a year away, but will be here before we know it. The RCA will continue to provide information on local issues and government actions. Once the campaign begins we will let you know how candidates measure up to our values.

### ***Voter registration reminder***

A friendly reminder that voter registration is open and available 12 months of the year. If you are already a registered voter, consider sharing this information with someone you know who may not be registered. Sometimes it is the simple act of sharing information that helps someone to complete that process. To register, visit the Town Hall or use the following link:

<https://vote.sos.ri.gov/Voter/RegisterToVote>

## **Community Profile**

### ***Matthew's Wish***

Matthew's Wish was born in 2016 when a young Richmond resident with Down Syndrome had one selfless Christmas wish: to host a toy drive for needy children and their families. In the first drive, Matthew and the team delivered 464 toys to Santa's Workshop at RI Center Assisting those in Need (RICAN). Since that first drive, the non-profit has helped countless families. Matthew's Wish will be collecting toys for RICAN at this year's tree lighting at the Town Hall on December 8. Stay tuned for details in an upcoming newsletter! [matthewswishri.com](http://matthewswishri.com)

## **Upcoming Meetings**

November 6 – Economic Development Committee Meeting – 9:15 am at Town Hall

November 6 – Rural Preservation Land Trust Meeting – 5:30 pm at Town Hall

November 7 – Town Council Meeting – 6 pm at Town Hall

November 14 – Planning Board Meeting – 6:30 pm at Town Hall

Agendas can be found at <https://clerkshq.com/richmond-ri>

## **Community Calendar**

November 11 – Veterans Appreciation Luncheon & Open House – at 12 pm at Richmond Senior/Community Center

November 11 – Field of Artisans – 10 am – 3 pm Big John Leyden's Tree Farm, West Greenwich

November 17 – CHARIHotech Thanksgiving Luncheon for Senior Citizens – reservation required (401) 552-7564

November 18 – Holiday Faire – 10 am at Meadowbrook Waldorf School

November 19 – Winter Vendor Fair – 10am-4pm – Richmond Elementary School

### **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](mailto:rca4richmond@gmail.com). We also welcome any tips or items of concern that you wish to bring to our attention.