



## **Town of Ridgefield**

### **Board of Finance**

#### **Approved Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday March 26, 2019

#### **Call to order**

D. Ulmer called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Finance at 7:30 PM on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at Ridgefield Town Hall Meeting Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT.

Board Members D. Ulmer, J. Mancini, A. Freidenrich, S. Connelly were in attendance. D. Moccia absent

#### **I.Parks & Rec.**

Members in attendance: Barbara Dobbin, Dennis DiPinto, Phil Kearns, Bob Schneider.

Bridge repairs and renovations hit Rec Center hard last year. Membership brings in the most revenue. The all-inclusive membership is popular. The wellness program is well accepted by members and reviews from the members are positive. The regular, lap, wellness and all-inclusive are packages offered. In regards to Pickleball, Parks & Rec committee invited the BOF to meet separately to discuss findings from the pickleball research. Parks & Rec feel pickleball is currently under charged and feel that they're still fairly priced. Everything that Parks & Rec does is researched and analyzed. They're open to discuss the pickleball scenario. Proposed operating budget highlights: 1. Continue to recapture revenue shortfall that occurred in 2017-2018. +0.52% in department's revenue for 2019-2020, increase \$17,120 over current 2018-2019 budget, increase \$200,578 over 2017-2018 actual. 2. Expenses flat; -0.02% in expenses. Proposed increase vs. current budget +\$17,120. Increase vs. 2017-2018 actual +\$200,578. Current 2018-2019 Recovery year from Headwinds in 2017-2018 which fell short of budget. Expect to recover shortfall in last year's revenue. 2017-2018 fell short \$168,557. Bridge repair and renovations were two big contributors to shortfall. 2019-2020 consolidation of this year's underway recover. In Capital budget, Rec Center HVAC is largest expense \$320,000.

Playgrounds-Park & Rec used to be in charge of playgrounds. Didn't receive all funding necessary. There is enough money just to maintain them. Playgrounds have been turned over to Board of Education. Parks & Rec couldn't fulfill playground needs which is the reason for the turnover to Board of Ed.

## **II. Board of Selectman**

In attendance-Rudy Marconi, Kevin Redmond, Bob Hebert, Maureen Kozlark.

At its meeting March 6, 2019, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to submit the following:

- Town Operations Budget expenditures for Fiscal 2019-2020 \$38,318.807
- Debt Service expenditures for Fiscal 2019-2020 \$11,315.116.
- Capital Budget expenditures for Fiscal 2019-2020 \$4,525,570.
- The Non-binding recommendation on the Board of Ed budget for Fiscal 2019-2020 \$97,463,760 which is \$460,000 lower than the BOE request.

Approved-town operation including roads. Debt service expenditures.

States statute-sent out in the beginning of the budget season. Incentivized retirements- 75% incentive given. The salary line used to cover that. Four positions have been eliminated and others reduced from full to part time. Haven't gone over budget except for conservation issues; money has been refunded back into account. Local engineers have been hired on a part time basis at an hourly rate. Some other positions have been reallocated or removed and a building department position has been eliminated. This allowed the budget to be adjusted. Actual savings \$500,000 including pensions and insurance. The budget is very lean. Disposable income of residents will be impacted with the new tax laws. The Board of Selectman is working for the future with a 5-10-year time frame down the road. The condition of the police department building is poor with wires all over; a very old building. The fire department is also in need of work. Cost for the study of the two buildings \$40-50,000. There is discussion of having one large building to house both police and fire.

The WPCA project is out to bid. Would like to be awarded a contract by July 1. The Board believes Dr. Collins is doing well and has a handle on the position.

There is a study to determine the best scenario for Ridgefield in regards to fire and police department buildings. A shared emergency work force is also in study. How to best deliver emergency services in town in the most efficient manner? The mutual aid of neighboring towns is being utilized for ambulance services.

PSAP-the route that all calls go into; costs the state operating money to maintain. If the bill is passed, this could be eliminated affecting CT towns.

Budget discussion- We can't budget based on "what ifs." The defined contributions will be a topic of discussion for the future. Less risk and more controlled of spending are needed. Currently looking on regional level for insurance and for various quotes with 18 communities for a lower cost. Residents are looking for their high tax amounts to go towards infrastructure, roads.

IT-An increase in IT expenditures. The main drive was for a hosted version cloud-based model. The town clerk needed scanners replaced.

Community Grants-These are contractual obligations. Some cut made but not major. Moved over to contractual obligations. The library was a big mover; a need to re-look at the library assessment.

Transportation- Sphere is looking to sell business. Do we buy from HART to continue servicing our loop? A decision should be made by June. Most rides are from town to Katonah train station. A need to maintain current route and add more routes to keep riders. Transportation needed from Branchville into town.

Firefighting/EMS-Increase due to multi family home inspections. Trying to keep up to code with inspections.

Teachers-Town should escrow money and negotiate for teachers' pension. We should be able to negotiate and be firm in our convictions.

Debt Servicing-Capital close out transfer. D. Ulmer wants to confirm the figure.

### **III. Adjournment**

J. Mancini moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 PM. Motion carried 4-0

Next meeting March 27, 2019

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Mia Belanger