



Town of Ridgefield Board of Finance

Approved Special Meeting Minutes

Thursday July 22, 2021

I. Call to order

Dave Ulmer called to order the Special Board of Finance meeting at 6:00 PM July 22, 2021 in the Town Hall small board room. Board Members Dave Ulmer, Greg Kabasakalian, Mike Rettger, Karen Ogden present. Others Present: Andrew Okrongly, David Cordisco, board candidates

Mr. Ulmer convened the meeting at 6pm. He thanked the candidates for their interest in the vacancy on the Board of Finance. Mr. Ulmer explained that each of the candidates would be interviewed separately, and the committee would discuss and decide on whether to vote on making an appointment for the seat vacated by Amy Fredenrich.

The order of interviews was decided by lots. Mr. Okrongly was interviewed first.

Mr. Ulmer asked several questions regarding the candidate's plans for running in November if appointed, and whether the candidate would foresee any constraints on his availability for meetings during the key budget development period in March and April. The members of the Board also asked a number of questions of the candidate regarding his background and interest in serving on the Board of Finance.

Mr. Okrongly left the meeting at 6:25 upon completion of questions and Mr. Cordisco joined the meeting. Mr. Ulmer and the other members of the Board asked the same questions of Mr. Cordisco as had been presented to Mr. Okrongly.

Upon completion of questions, Mr. Cordisco left the meeting and the members discussed their opinions of the two candidates. Mr. Ulmer noted that the Democratic Town Committee had endorsed Mr. Okrongly for the vacancy, and had communicated that endorsement in writing. This communication had been shared with the Board members prior to the meeting and is attached to these minutes as Exhibit 1.

Following further discussion, the members of the Board voted to appointment Mr. Okrongly to the vacant position, with Mr. Kabasakalian abstaining. Both candidates were invited back to the meeting and the result of the Board vote was reported to them.

After completion of this action, the members discussed whether to hold future BOF meetings in person or via Zoom. All members were agreeable with meeting in person.

Upon motion by Mr. Rettger and second by Ms. Ogden, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Next meeting August 17, 2021, 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Mia Belanger

*See attachment.

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

Board of Finance
Town of Ridgefield
c/o David F. Ulmer, Chairperson
400 Main Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877

VIA email to dulmer@ridgefieldct.org

Re: Ridgefield Democratic Town Committee ("DTC") Endorsement
To Fill Democratic Vacancy
On Ridgefield Board of Finance ("BOF")

Dear Chairperson Ulmer and Members of the Board of Finance:

Based upon the resignation of Amy Macartney Freidenrich as an elected member of your board effective on Wednesday, June 30th, 2021, the Ridgefield Town Charter (Section 4-7 of Article IV) requires the vacancy to be filled by a member of the Democratic Party, since Ms. Freidenrich was elected as a Democrat. I am pleased to report, on behalf of the Ridgefield Democratic Town Committee ("DTC"), that the DTC has voted to endorse and recommend **Mr. Andrew J. Okrongly, CFA**, for this appointment, and we ask for your support in appointing Mr. Okrongly to fill this vacancy.

It is important to emphasize that this endorsement has been achieved via a public, collaborative, and thoughtful process. Immediately after the vacancy was announced, the DTC published solicitations for interested and qualified parties. Our Recruitment Subcommittee kept the BOF informed about any candidates, and encouraged candidates to engage with the BOF on an independent basis - since it is ultimately your responsibility to make the appointment. We identified two people with interest, and both followed through with an application to the BOF by your deadline. Our subcommittee met with both candidates for 45-60 minutes to explore their qualifications, and then both were invited to present themselves for consideration by the full 23-member DTC on the evening of Tuesday, July 20th (with a large majority of DTC members in attendance at last night's special meeting).

For both candidates, we reviewed their professional and civic backgrounds, and probed for knowledge, skills, and experience that would be relevant to serving on the BOF. We considered how each person would contribute to current and expected BOF issues, and we addressed many of these issues in our discussions and questions. Between the candidates, the DTC believes Mr.

Okrongly brings the most relevant expertise. We also found him to be **thoughtful, open-minded,** and **data-driven** in his approach to the issues - all important traits for a member of the Board of Finance.

Mr. Okrongly is a **native Ridgefielder** with over **ten years of experience in the financial services industry**. He **grew up in Ridgefield, attended Ridgefield Public Schools,** and was a 2006 graduate of Ridgefield High School. Andrew and his **wife Mariah Hutchings Okrongly, who also grew up in Ridgefield,** recently relocated back to Ridgefield from Brooklyn. Andrew is a Director at Commonfund, an independent asset management firm located in Wilton, serving nonprofit institutions. In this capacity he works with educational organizations and foundations as an **Outsourced Chief Investment Officer**, providing comprehensive financial advisory services and managing the strategic asset allocation of global investment portfolios. Prior to joining Commonfund in 2019, Andrew was a Vice President at **BlackRock** in New York and London. Andrew **currently volunteers on two Town Committees:** the Ridgefield Arts Council (where he currently serves as Treasurer), and the Ridgefield Pension Commission. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration with Distinction from the Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, and also earned the **Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA)** designation.

The DTC believes Mr. Okrongly brings skills, experience, and perspective that will be valuable for the BOF in the immediate vacancy period, and also over the long term.

I ask that this letter of endorsement be read and/or entered into the record at the next meeting of the Board of Finance.

Sincerely,



Joe Shapiro
Chair, Ridgefield Democratic Town Committee

Cc: All members of the Ridgefield Democratic Town Committee