



## **Town of Ridgefield Board of Finance**

### **Approved BOF Meeting Minutes** Tuesday March 21, 2023

#### **I. Call to order**

Dave Ulmer called the Board of Finance meeting to order at 7:00 PM on March 21, 2023 in the Town Hall large conference room. Board Members Dave Ulmer, Mike Rettger, Andrew Okrongly, Joe Shapiro, and Greg Kabasakalian present.

Others Participating: Kevin Redmond, Controller; Molly McGeehin, Treasurer; Jane Berendsen Hill, Tax Collector; Dr. Susie Da Silva, RPS Superintendent; Jill Browne, RPS Business Manager; Dr. Wes DeSantis, RPS Technology Department Manager; Sean McEvoy, BOE member.

#### **II. Public Comments**

None

**III. Motion** by Mr. Rettger to move BOE financials forward to the beginning of the meeting agenda, to accommodate schedule conflicts. Seconded by Mr. Okrongly. All in favor.

#### **IV. BOE Financial Update**

Ms. Browne reviewed the BOE financial report, which was distributed in advance of the meeting\*\*. As of the end of February, the BOE has expended or obligated approximately 98% of their budget. Overall spending in aggregate remains on track with budget, but with continuing monitoring of Special Education tuition and transportation, and energy costs. Based on results year to date and absent any late-developing surprises, the BOE expects that the approximately \$1 million of savings in the health insurance area will flow through as a budget surplus at this year end.

Dr. DeSantis and Dr. Da Silva outlined a pilot program the BOE is considering, of offering to sell outdated PCs and other technical equipment to student families and staff when the equipment reaches end of functional life, as an alternative to selling it for scrap value. The process will be

controlled by the technology and finance departments, with any recovery being used to offset the technology budget. The BOF members indicated their support for the initiative.

In response to earlier questions from the BOF, Ms. Browne and Mr. McEvoy discussed the BOE's plans to address the concerns raised in the recent auditor's report regarding problems with the close and completing the audit this last year. Several actions have been taken, including setting earlier deadlines for completion of purchases and moving accounts from an Excel platform to the district's main accounting program. These changes have been communicated to the auditor. With these changes the BOE feels it is a good position not to have a repeat of the situation. Several members expressed their concern about the seriousness of this issue, the importance of regular and robust communication to RPS by the auditor, and the BOE's need to prevent this from becoming a serious audit concern at the end of this year.

#### **V. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Mr. Rettger to approve the minutes of February 21, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Okrongly. All in favor

#### **VI. Treasurer Report**

Ms. McGeehin reviewed the Treasurer's Report, which was distributed prior to the meeting\*\*. She discussed upcoming maturities in the portfolio and her plans for reinvestment of the proceeds.

#### **VII. Tax Collector Report**

Ms. Berendsen Hill reviewed the Tax Collector's Report, which was distributed prior to the meeting\*\*. Boehringer Ingelheim has paid their tax bill early this quarter, resulting in a higher-than-usual result for February collections. The tax sale is scheduled for June 1, 2023 involving 10 properties, with anticipated collections of approximately \$600,000 by June 30.

#### **VIII. Controllers Report**

Mr. Redmond reviewed the Controller's report which had been distributed in advance of the meeting\*\*. Revenues continue strong, particularly Ambulance and Parks & Rec. The revenue forecast is over \$2 million favorable. In expenses, we are seeing overages in audit fees, legal (being higher due to a settlement), and IT, with civilian dispatch under budget.

#### **IX. Capital Close-outs**

The BOS has reviewed a report of capital projects that are complete with remaining unspent budgets, totaling \$834,000. The BOS has proposed using \$721,571.84 of these funds toward the funding of other capital projects that are over budget, as well as several new capital projects. The BOF members questioned if this was following correct procedure, as neither the additional spending for the previously approved projects nor the spending for any new capital appropriations had gone through the regular additional appropriations and town meeting approval process. The BOS proposal will be sent back to the BOS with the request that this be brought forward through the regular additional capital appropriation process specified in the Charter.

## **X. Old Business**

1) Mr. Ulmer reported that he had presented the proposed Town Charter changes discussed at the last BOF meeting to the Charter Revision Commission. Mr. Rettger reported that the BOF amendments had been accepted as proposed. He also reported that there is continuing discussion of changes to section 10-1 of the Charter regarding the powers of the Town budget meeting, but that the Commission had declined a proposal for the budget referendum to include a “No-Too Low” and “No-Too High” voting option.

2) Mr. Kabasakalian discussed minutes from a recent WPCA meeting that discussed the pending sale of the Route 7 property, and suggested the BOF ask for another update from the WPCA.

## **XI. New Business**

The members discussed and agreed to topics for the upcoming budget meetings at the end of the month, as follows:

- Monday, 3/27 – Public Hearing, East Ridge Middle School
- Tuesday, 3/28 – BOS Budget
- Wednesday, 3/29 – BOE Budget and Capital
- Thursday, 3/30 – BOS Budget and Capital, Non-tax Revenues
- Monday, 4/3 – BOS and BOE Budget and Capital, follow up items, possible votes on revenues and budgets
- Tuesday, 4/4 (if needed) - BOS and BOE Budget and Capital, follow up items, possible votes on revenues and budgets

## **XII. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. by Mr. Rettger, seconded by Mr. Shapiro. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Mia Belanger

\*\* Materials that were distributed in advance of the meeting in the BOF members’ packets are maintained on file in the Controller’s office.