

Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Wednesday, January 23, 2019 – 6:30pm
Town Hall Large Conference Room
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

Special Recognition

Ridgefield High School Girls Soccer Team 2018 Accomplishments

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Appointment & Reappointment Requests:
 - a. Judy Stoner – Graveyard Restoration Committee
 - b. Karen Bosshart – Insurance Risk & Mgmt Committee
 - c. John Devine Jr. – Reappointment to the ECDC
 - d. Jacqueline Bean – Affordable Housing Committee
 - e. Jane Tullo – Affordable Housing Committee
 - f. Kevin Brown – Affordable Housing Committee
 - g. Kent Kohrer – Affordable Housing Committee
3. Henny Penny License Agreement
4. Cornerstone License Agreement
5. Ridgefield Playhouse Lease
6. School Facilities Report
7. Article IV Review – Tax Deferment for the Elderly
8. Intellectual Edge Lease
9. Selectman’s Report
10. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 12/12/18, 01/09/19

In attendance: R. Marconi, B. Hebert, S. Zemo, M. Kozlark, B. Manners

R. Marconi called the **Board of Selectmen** meeting to order at 6:34PM.

R. Marconi gave a special recognition to the Ridgefield Girls Soccer Team and their recent championship win. He read a proclamation also congratulating the team for maintaining a 4.0 average. He presented the team with a plaque commemorating their accomplishment.

1. Public Comment

No Comment

2. Appointment & Reappointment Requests:

- a. Judy Stoner – Graveyard Restoration Committee

Judy Stoner requested an appointment for the Graveyard Restoration Committee, which is a position created to replace Beth Yanity. B. Yanity will go on to Honorary Member status. J. Stoner is a self-described history buff. She has always volunteered with cemetery clean-up. She would like the opportunity to finally be a part of a committee that reflects her passions.

R. Marconi mentioned the increase in budget costs for the committee because of the addition of the Branchville graveyard to the list of responsibilities. The increase in budget costs has been due to damage from bad weather, the need to remove old trees, and overall years of neglect.

S. Zemo moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to appoint Judy Stoner to the Graveyard Restoration Committee. Motion carried 5-0.

b. Karen Bosshart – Insurance Risk & Mgmt Committee

Karen Bosshart is a self-employed attorney who primarily works in CT and currently practices family law. She has a background in insurance matters, which she feels makes her a good fit for the position. She is self-described as detail-oriented with a vast experience with investigatory paperwork.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to appoint Karen Bosshart to the Insurance Risk & Management Committee. Motion carried 5-0.

c. John Devine Jr. – Reappointment to the ECDC

John Devine Jr. spoke of the recent accomplishments of the ECDC over the recent months and the various things the ECDC has accomplished for the Town. They are currently at full member capacity. J. Devine also mentioned the diversity of the ECDC, including: one member who has experience as a commercial real estate broker and a great exemplification of gender diversity. He added that the ECDC is working with the Arts Council and other town organizations to help fix silos. J. Devine noted the importance of marketing the nearby area. He added how excited he is that so many people are continually showing an interest in being involved.

B. Manners said the Ridgefield Library is having a celebration in honor of the 100-year anniversary of Women's Suffrage. J. Devine said he was not aware of the event but is interested in learning more about it. B. Manners offered some names of researchers with knowledge of Women's Suffrage.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to reappoint John Devine Jr. to the ECDC. Motion carried 5-0.

d. Jacqueline Bean – Affordable Housing Committee

Jacqueline Bean comes from a background in property management and realty.

S. Zemo asked J. Bean what she feels is the role of Affordable Housing in this committee. She stated she needs to learn more information and expressed the desire to participate in brainstorming some ideas.

B. Hebert inquired about any unique skills she would bring to the committee.

J. Bean referenced her specialized experience and knowledge of Section 8 and her current position as a RAP coordinator.

M. Kozlark said the previously compiled Affordable Housing data from 20 years ago was done well, but that this would be a great time to update the data.

J. Bean summarized her purpose on the committee as a person who sets and follows goals until they are achieved.

e. Jane Tullo – Affordable Housing Committee

Jane Tullo has 35 years of experience in real estate, securing homes for people across the spectrum of Ridgefield housing opportunities. J. Tullo said that most of her experience has been with rental housing and affordable housing type 8-30g. She has a slight concern about some of the development of Affordable Housing in Ridgefield and the places they are being built. She would like to learn more and become more a part of the process.

B. Hebert asked J. Tullo if she feels there is a demand for the 8-30g component, if she would like to see more of it and, if so, where. She responded that she feels there is a concern about where the housing will be built, but added that she is not sure of the level of control there is over it.

R. Marconi mentioned some of the standards for 8-30g leaves the town without a lot of control over the development, which is being worked on to be more sensible.

She admits to needing to learn more about other types of Affordable Housing. She says her role in the committee would be to give feedback and continue to learn more. She also feels that there are misconceptions about Affordable Housing she feels needs to be clarified.

f. Kevin Brown – Affordable Housing Committee

Kevin Brown, an attorney for Day Pitney LLP, has an interest in Affordable Housing and is a commercial litigator with a vast knowledge of 8-30g.

M. Kozlark asked K. Brown to speak more about his vision of Affordable Housing in the town. K. Brown said he is looking to help figure out a system that would fulfill Affordable Housing for people of all needs and be best for the greater community.

S. Zemo mentioned the insatiable need for Affordable Housing, and then asked if K. Brown feels Affordable Housing can be balanced in the community. K. Brown replied that he needed to know more, but doesn't want to see too much or too little Affordable Housing.

g. Kent Kohrer – Affordable Housing Committee

Kent Kohrer has experience working for Habitat for Humanity. He additionally holds an accounting degree. He feels there is place for 8-30g, but that it is not the only Affordable Housing option.

K. Kohrer was asked about his experience working with Dave Goldberg, another possible Affordable Housing committee member, and how they knew each other from Habitat for Humanity. He feels optimistic that they have had some productive discussions regarding housing.

K. Kohrer wants the committee to be more than just a bunch of data gatherers. He would like to see what they can do for families of all sizes and types.

B. Manners moved and S. Zemo seconded the motion to appoint: Jacqueline Bean, Jane Tullo, Kevin Brown, and Kent Kohrer to the Affordable Housing Committee. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Henny Penny License Agreement

Whitney Freeman, of the Henny Penny Farm, and Kitsey Snow, a member of the Conservation Commission, sat at the BOS table to discuss the license agreement. W. Freeman stated there have been issues with the goats contracting the highly contagious hoof rot problem. The intense amount of rain made the situation worse. The season had to be cut short. W. Freeman stated she installed eight hundred feet of pipe line this season. The rest will go in the Spring, if it is warm enough.

R. Marconi said a legal agreement is appropriate because there is no actual lease. There is a license agreement for one season at this time.

S. Zemo moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to approve the Henny Penny License Agreement with modification. Motion carried 5-0.

4. Cornerstone License Agreement

CeCe Burger discussed the Cornerstone License Agreement with the BOS.

R. Marconi asked CeCe Berger about her intentions for the property. She replied with her desire to keep an educational garden for people with Intellectual disabilities. She asked to amend the license agreement and to revise the language to include that the garden is meant for people with Intellectual disabilities.

R. Hebert moved and R. Marconi seconded a motion to approve the Cornerstone License Agreement with modification. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Ridgefield Playhouse Lease

Allison Stockel, Executive Director of the Ridgefield Playhouse, was invited to the BOS table to discuss the renewal of the lease. A change was made to the lease to ask the Ridgefield Playhouse to begin working with the BOS 6 months prior to the end of their lease agreement on negotiations and possible process renewal.

R. Marconi moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve the Ridgefield Playhouse Lease as modified. Motion carried 5-0.

6. School Facilities Report

Members of the PTA: Amy, Jessica, Fran, and Joe (part of head maintenance) participated in the discussion with the BOS about the various items in need of repair of which were noted during the BOE tour of the schools. The discussion also included if and where the capital will come from to pay for any approved repairs.

R. Marconi requested that the PTA complete a report including all of their observations and concerns regarding school repairs.

B. Hebert left the meeting at 9:01PM.

B. Hebert returned to the meeting at 9:06PM.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to change the order of Item 7 with Item 8 on the night's agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Article IV Review – Tax Deferment for the Elderly

John Fisher, president of The Ridgefield Owl's Club, met with the BOS for the second time to discuss the issue of tax relief for the elderly. J. Fisher would like to amend the original proposals from May 2018,

which included: 1) an increase in annual property tax reduction from \$1048 to \$1200 per year; 2) an increase in the income requirement for tax deferment from \$55,000 to \$65,000 per year; and 3) freezing the real estate taxes for individuals 75 years or older. These proposals were previously costed out. J. Fisher requested an amendment to the original proposals. He asked for an increase to the income requirement for property tax deferment from \$55,000 to \$65,000.

B. Manners left the meeting at 10:04PM.

S. Zemo asked if J. Fisher did an informal survey about the numbers he proposes. J. Fisher mentioned that the average income in Ridgefield is approximately \$90,000 per year and that the cost of goods and services is related to that income level. J. Fisher would like to see this amended proposal reviewed, and then included as a part of a near-future Public Hearing. R. Marconi added that an attorney would be present at such time.

B. Manners returned to the meeting at 10:10PM.

8. Intellectual Edge Lease

John Hsu is presently overseas for a funeral being held for the loss of a family member.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to approve the Intellectual Edge Lease with the two modifications made at the 1/23/19 meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Selectman's Report

R. Marconi referenced a letter from the State of Connecticut, stating The General Assembly passed a bill allowing for tax property grants for motor vehicle owners. The BOS then mentioned the then-government shutdown, affecting Federal employees all over the country and for these federal employees to receive unemployment compensation. S. Zemo received confirmation from R. Marconi that this would be a deferment.

R. Marconi received notice that significant rainfall is expected, and as a result, there might be some standing water on the roads, despite repairs to the pipes in the Town.

10. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 12/12/18, 01/09/19

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to approve the 12/12/18 meeting minutes with modifications. Motion carried 5-0.

R. Marconi moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to revisit the 1/9/19 meeting minutes at the 2/6/19 meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

B. Hebert moved and M. Kozlark seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:45PM. The motion was seconded by M. Kozlark. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa M. Ackerly