

Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, February 7, 2019 – 7:00 pm
Town Hall Large Conference Room
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Agenda

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

1. Police Dept. Budget
2. Fire Dept. Budget
3. General Budget Discussion
4. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7:01PM.

1. Police Dept. Budget

Present: Police Commission Board Members (Joseph Savino, George Kain, & Stephen Saloom)
Chief Jeff Kreitz
Kevin Redmond, Town of Ridgefield Controller

Operating Expenses:

- 10401-Police Patrol increased a little over 1% due to a reduction in the number of cruisers and salary savings.
- M. Kozlark asked about overtime. The Police Dept. said that actual full-time salary is down, which could be due to vacancies.
- The Police Dept. requested better quality tires for their Police cruisers. They need to replace the whole fleet with new and better tires. They drive more often, so more frequent oil changes are also required.
- Total operating expenses are 2%.
- 10535-Animal Control- The Police Dept. requested an increase in overtime. Animal Control personnel is always working, and always trying to find homes for the dogs.
- S. Zemo asked if the dogs could go to ROAR. The Police Dept. said It depends on savings as well as the factors.

B. Manners entered the meeting at 7:14PM.

Operating Expenses (continued):

-Electric costs are up because the Police Department is locked into a higher rate plan, yet they are lower in gas, diesel, and utilities overall.

Capital:

-M. Kozlark inquired about the license plate reader, and if it was an absolute necessity to the department. The Police Dept. stated it is not a top priority. The equipment is very advanced, a lot of information can be obtained through it, but it's not used in parking situations.

-The Fire Dept. made a request for a Crash and Mapping System, which will open roads faster during accidents. Further, the Crime Scene Mapping Device provides a lot of information related to the crime that is needed for the process. There will have to be updates using a purchased software every so often. The lifetime of this equipment is estimated at 7 years.

-The Police Dept. requested a new recording system. The department's lease for the older system ends this October. The new system can record text 911, which would be very helpful for serious situations like hostage situations. R. Marconi asked if other departments have reviewed this new system. The Police Dept. said the equipment got very good reviews.

2. Fire Dept. Budget

Present: Chief Jerry Myers

Kevin Redmond, Town of Ridgefield Controller

Operation Expenses:

-There was a vacancy that helped lower the Fire Dept. budget.

-The Fire Inspector is allotted 12 hours of inspection per week. They are asking for 4 more hours per week to account for the slight overage.

-R. Marconi asked why the BOS is no longer receiving reports on the survey concerning the grade given to the Town. The Fire Dept said they will make sure to provide these reports. The Town is still in the top 24.

-B. Hebert asked about the amount of overtime. The Fire Dept. mentioned that everyone in the department received a 2.5% raise. The Fire Dept. also asked for 6 more hours for the department.

-Training increased because 4 people were hired.

-B. Hebert mentioned that there was a 17% increase under the training and supplies line. He continued to ask if that is necessary. The Fire Dept. stated that the increase is due to one day of complete training for the whole department. Increased training was desired and it accounts for the overage.

-The Police Dept. said there is more training this month and next month for recertification, CPR, and other types of certifications.

-B. Hebert asked if they can lower the expenses for training. The idea was discussed but no formal decision has been made.

-The 8.3% has been cut down to approximately 2% in the Fire Dept. expenses portion of the budget.

-The total Fire Dept. budget is 4.6%. B. Hebert said they should do something with the training expenses to lower the budget further, even though he feels that the overall expenditures portion of the budget is fair as it stands.

Capital:

-R. Marconi said the ladder pump truck was originally removed from the request list. The Fire Dept. said that the current ladder truck is 35 years old and does not fit some of the necessary standards, so this request is very much needed. B. Hebert asked if the old ladder truck has any value and can be resold. The Fire Dept. said they have not looked into it, but it could be used for non-firefighting purposes. The BOS will know if the decision can be made in favor of the purchase by this March. The Fire Dept. quoted the price of the ladder pump truck plus an additional \$50,000 for training. The training should be included in the October grant as well as in the operating expenditures portion of the budget.

-R. Marconi proposed holding a Town Meeting for some of the Fire Dept.'s more expensive requests.

-M. Kozlark asked if the rest of the capital request is for the replacement of gear. The Fire Dept. said the gear needs to be replaced every ten years. Damaged gear also has to be replaced.

-2 new ambulances were requested because they were short. Currently, there are three, but one is not running at full efficiency.

-R. Marconi has a meeting in the near future with B. I. to talk about donations.

-M. Kozlark asked if there is a way to expedite the grant process as well as to increase the chances of getting the grant. M. Kozlark suggested finding a grant writer. R. Marconi suggested using a copy of a similar type of grant as a template.

-The Fire Dept. mentioned that some of their future vehicle needs will be over the next few years and will be based on the age and condition of their vehicles. The Fire Dept. was given the go ahead by the BOS to update their capital budget requests for the next few years.

3. General Budget Discussion

-R. Marconi began discussions regarding the breakdown of the Town debt. The idea was to put some the requests on hold in an attempt to chip away at the debt.

-Kevin Redmond discussed the specifics of the Town debt. He mentioned that the bundle expenditures of 2007 greatly increased the Town debt, but since then it has been decreasing at a fairly steady rate.

-K. Redmond discussed the current debt number as being at 4.2 million dollars.

-K. Redmond stated that the sewer project is anticipated to be formally requested in fiscal year 2021.

-The BOS discussed the projections and numbers related to the overall debt, debt solution, and how it affects this year's budget details.

-M. Kozlark proposed lowering the overall capital that is applied to all departments in the budget.

-M. Kozlark also posed the idea of combining website material for the Town organizations into less websites, which would ultimately save money. The BOS said that the ECDC could act as the main website source. They realize it would be an investment and possibly cost more budget dollars, but it would save them money in the end.

-S. Zemo suggested holding a Special BOS Meeting with the BOE.

-S. Zemo said that budget discussions should be made with Parks and Rec.

-Non for Profits, such as: We Care, Meals on Wheels, Ability Beyond, and several more, were discussed in terms of how they fit into the budget. B. Hebert mentioned the possibility of making some cuts to some of these organizations.

4. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote

No vote

B. Hebert made a motion and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to adjourn the BOS meeting at 10:01PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa M. Ackerly