

Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Wednesday, February 19, 2020 - 6:30pm
Town Hall, (Large Conference Room)
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED Minutes

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

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

Absent: B. Manners

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Turner Road Presentation & Discussion Only
3. Appointments
 - a. Richard Aarons - Reappoint as Emergency Management Director
 - b. Historic District Commission
 - i. Appoint - Elizabeth DiSalvo - Alternate
 - ii. Move - Harriet Hanlon - from Alternate to Full
 - c. Conservation Commission
 - i. Reappoint - Carroll Brewster
 - ii. Reappoint - David Cronin
4. McKeon Farm - Renew License Agreement
5. Conservation Commission - Open Space Settlement
6. WestCog - Western CT Council of Governments, (RFP) Request for Proposal
7. Tax Collector Refunds
8. Resolution - General Obligation Refunding Bonds
9. Approval of Minutes - January 22, 2020
10. Selectman's Report

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectmen's Meeting to order at 6:30pm.

1. Public Comment

Lynne Noyes of 43 Circle Drive East - Ms. Noyes was speaking for herself and her husband as well. Ms. Noyes has degrees in Plant biology and Conservation while her husband George has degrees in Aquatic Biology and Conservation. In their opinion, Turner Road is the home of some State protected species, and opening the long closed road will have a negative impact on them.

R. Marconi reminded the public that the purpose of the meeting is to look at the possibility of a maintenance agreement for this project. The BOS is strictly looking at this as a Town property, as they are not Planning & Zoning, or the Conservation Commission.

Gloria Driscoll - 9 Barnum Pl - Ms. Driscoll presented the BOS with a petition with approximately 400 signatures requesting the BOS to deny the opening of the closed portion of Turner Road as requested by Black Oaks, LLC.

Harold Moroknek - 34 Barnum Pl - President of the Turner Hill Neighborhood Association - Mr. Moroknek been a resident of Ridgefield since 1996. Mr. Moroknek believes this is a safety issue, and that the developer is trying to squeeze a development into an area where there just simply isn't enough room. When Mr. Moroknek checked with the Fire Marshall to ask if there was an emergency situation, would there be enough room for all of their equipment, the response was that it would be "tight".

Tracey O'Connor - Ridgefield Voters United (RVU) - The RVU strongly supports affordable housing. The development being discussed off Turner Road does not plan to provide handicapped accessibility, and on this basis alone the RVU believe that P&Z should not approve the current proposal. In the opinion of the RVU, any all-new 8-30g development should be fully ADA compliant. RVU recommends that the Turner Road remain closed.

Briggs Tobin - 35 Downesbury Ct. - Mr. Tobin is the Vice Chair of the Historic District Commission, which has two appointments on the BOS agenda this evening. Mr. Tobin wanted the BOS to know that these two appointees have the full support of the Commission behind them.

2. Turner Road Presentation & Discussion Only

Attorney Brian Smith, of Robinson & Cole was present representing the Black Oaks, LLC. Black Oaks, LLC is proposing a 9 unit development off Barnum Place. To access the developer is asking the Town's permission to use a long unused road which the Town no longer uses or maintains. The BOS is reviewing a possible agreement to maintain a new roadway, on town property.

Steve Sullivan, Civil Engineer from CCA, the project engineer, described to the BOS what changes the LLC plans to make to the discontinued roadway. Attorney Smith mentioned, they are proposing a crosswalk, and an additional sidewalk on Turner Road and well as Barnum Place. Attorney Smith will work on the details of the road maintenance agreement with the BOS and the Town Attorney to ensure it's worded to meet the Town's requirements. The BOS raised many questions.

1. There was discussion about the size of the parking lot, in regards to an emergency vehicle having enough room to maneuver.

2. S. Connelly was concerned about the grade of the hill. Mr. Sullivan explained they would be change the grade of the hill so it wouldn't be as steep.
3. There was some clarification as to where the proposed sidewalk would be.
4. R. Marconi expressed concern with regarding the steep embankment behind the building, and if the fire department would have access to the rear of the building. In response Mr. Sullivan said that they would be able to reach the back of the building on foot with ladders, and that the building would also have automatic sprinklers.
5. R. Marconi asked about the project's ADA compliancy. Mr. Sullivan responded that because the building is under 10 units, they are not required to meet ADA requirements, but they are willing to do so.
6. There was discussion regarding the narrow road. There was concern about where the snow would be plowed in the winter.

The BOS is not prepared to sign the road agreement. There are many questions and concerns still to be considered. Mr. Smith agreed to supply the BOS with answers to questions.

3. Appointments

a. Richard Aarons - Reappoint as Emergency Management Director

Richard Aarons was interviewed by the BOS for reappointment as Emergency Management Director. R. Marconi thanked Mr. Aarons for the amount of time he puts into making Ridgefield a safe community. Mr. Aarons is very thankful for the opportunity.

B. Hebert moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to reappoint Richard Aarons as Emergency Management Director. Motion carried 4-0.

b. Historic District Commission

ii. Move - Harriet Hanlon - Alternate to Full Member

Harriet Hanlon was interviewed by the BOS. She is interested in becoming a Full Member of the Historic District Commission from her current role as an Alternate. Ms. Hanlon has enjoyed her time serving on the commission and would like to continue.

R. Marconi read a letter of recommendation from Dan O'Brien, Chair of the Historic District Commission. The letter stated that Ms. Hanlon served with distinction in her role as an Alternate Member in the last 4 years. Ms. Hanlon contributed to the commission's advocacy for the Historic Preservation Objectives of the 2020 POCD, and

cares deeply about preserving Ridgefield's History and maintaining the the aesthetic integrity of the Historic Districts. Mr. O'Brien enthusiastically supports Ms. Hanlon's appointment.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to move Harriet Hanlon from an Alternate Member of the Historic District Commission to a Full Member. Motion carried 4-0.

i. Appoint - Elizabeth DiSalvo - Alternate

Ms. DiSalvo interviewed for the Alternate position on the Historic District Commission. R. Marconi began by reading a letter of recommendation from Dan O'Brien, Chair of the Historic District Commission: Ms. DiSalvo is a well-respected architect in Ridgefield, and has restored many historic homes in Connecticut. Ms. DiSalvo's experience and expertise will be invaluable to the HDC. Mr. O'Brien enthusiastically supports Ms. DiSalvo's appointment.

As an architect Ms. DiSalvo has presented before many historic boards, in Fairfield, Westchester counties, and New York City. Ms. DiSalvo cares deeply about Ridgefield. She wants to and maintain the Town's character and brand by maintaining the historic homes in Town.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to appoint Elizabeth DiSalvo as an Alternate to the Historic District Commission. Motion carried 4-0.

c. Conservation Commission

i. Reappoint - Carroll Brewster

ii. Reappoint - David Cronin

Carroll Brewster and David Cronin were interviewed for reappointment to the Conservation Commission. There was a brief discussion about the changes made to the classifications of open space designation prior to the interviews. A formal presentation on this will be made at a future BOS meeting.

Mr. Brewster and Mr. Cronin have a combined 40 years of experience in service to the Town. Mr. Brewster attended his first meeting as a member of the Conservation Commission in July of 1966. B. Hebert commended Mr. Cronin for attending 24 out of 24 meetings.

The Commission has done some work cleaning up McKeon Farm, and they are also working with the Boy Scouts on The Boardwalk Trail.

B. Hebert moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to appoint Carroll Brewster to the Conservation Commission. Motion carried 4-0.

B. Hebert moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to appoint David Cronin to the Conservation Commission. Motion carried 4-0.

4. McKeon Farm - Renew License Agreement

Jim Coyle, Chair of the Conservation Commission introduced Whitney Freeman, owner of Henny Penny Farms. Ms. Freeman would like to extend her license agreement with the Town and add another piece of pasture to her agreement.

Ms. Freeman explained that in the long term to be sustainable financially, she would need to have more sheep. She would require more land to have more animals. Scaling up is a gradual process. The new well has been completed through the State grant.

The BOS and Ms. Freeman discussed how many acres she uses, and how many acres she is planning to use. The terms of the additional acres under the new license agreement were satisfactory to all.

There was a brief discussion regarding finding replacements for the apple trees in the orchard.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to renew Whitney Freeman's License Agreement of McKeon Farm for a period one year as outlined in the license agreement. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Conservation Commission - Open Space Settlement

The Town had a two party settlement totaling \$42,995 (\$27,500 to be paid by the contractor, and \$15,495 to be paid by Bruce & Diane Ritter) regarding trees that were cut down on open space property owned by the Town. As part of the settlement agreement the logs and brush that were improperly taken down will be removed on or before May 30, 2020 under the supervision of the Conservation Commission.

There was a question from the audience asking how this had happened. R. Marconi explained that there were 5 or 6 large trees that had been cut down and were in the Town's open space near one of the trails. They were found by a member of the Conservation Commission. Some discussion followed about how this type of destruction is monitored, and how the settlement is determined.

B. Hebert moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to accept the settlement for the cutting of trees on Conservation Commission land in the amount of \$42,995. Motion carried 4-0.

6. WestCog - Western CT Council of Governments, (RFP) Request for Proposal

R. Marconi explained to the BOS that this RFP (Request for Proposal) is being requested to be approved by all 18 members of the Western Connecticut Council of Governments. He further explained that is an RFP for a resolution of endorsing and authorizing WestCOG's RPIP which is a regional performance incentive program, applications due by February 29, 2020.

The projects included 1) Regional economic development initiatives. 2) Regional planimetric dataset update. 3) Regional animal control facilities/services. 4) Regional transfer station facilities/services. 5) Statewide municipal boundary survey (class D) update. R. Marconi briefly discussed each.

The BOS was concerned that this could possibly be a step toward regionalization, R. Marconi assured the BOS that it is not looking in that direction.

B. Hebert moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to adopt the following resolution “BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Ridgefield endorses the five (5) proposals approved by the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) at its regular meeting on December 31, 2019, and submitted in grant applications to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management on December 31, 2019, and authorizes WestCOG to apply for funding and to enter into any required contract and/or agreement should one or more of these proposals be selected for an award.”. Motion carried 4-0.

7. Tax Collector Refunds

The Tax Collector Refunds as submitted were \$16,235.47. The refunds are for cars that were traded in and/or sold while the taxpayer had paid for the full year of taxes. Residents get a refund of what they overpaid.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to approve the Tax Collector Refunds in the amount of \$16,235.47. Motion carried 4-0.

8. Resolution - General Obligation Refunding Bonds

The BOS received and read a copy of the Resolution with respect to the Authorization, Issuance, and Sale of not exceeding \$9,000,000, Town of Ridgefield, CT, General Obligation Refunding Bonds.

S. Connelly moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to waive the reading of the Bond Resolution. Motion carried 4-0.

S. Connelly moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to approve the Resolution with Respect to the Authorization, Issuance and Sale of not exceeding \$9,000,000, Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut, General Obligation Refunding Bonds. Motion carried 4-0.

9. Approval of Minutes - January 22, 2020

The BOS discussed and made some modifications to the minutes from the January 22, 2020 BOS Meeting before approving them.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Connelly seconded the motion to approve the January 22, 2020 Minutes from the Board of Selectmen Meeting as modified. Motion carried 4-0.

10. Selectman's Report

Turf Fields

R. Marconi had a meeting with Aquarian Water. There was a presentation that questioned the use of turf fields because the chemical used in fire extinguisher foam may also be used in materials being used in some plastics of turf fields. The concern is regarding the on impact the people using the fields R. Marconi asked the COG to request the State to take the lead on this testing and address the concerns aired.

R. Marconi is going to have Jake Muller, Director of Purchasing take samples of the three turf fields currently in Town, Scotts Ridge, Tiger Hollow, and Tiger Hollow II and have them tested.

Census Bureau

R. Marconi reported that the census report is almost complete. He will bring the completed report before the BOS. The report has to be submitted by February 24, 2020, so the BOS discussed a possible special meeting to vote and approve the report in order to submit it on time.

S. Connelly moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 8:57pm. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Hollie M. Rapp