

**Town of Ridgefield**  
**Board of Selectmen Meeting**  
Wednesday, November 28, 2018 – 6:30 pm  
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, M. Kozlark, B. Hebert, B. Manners, S. Zemo-Absent

**Agenda**

1. Public Comment
2. BOE – Enrollment Projections Update 2018—2019
3. Erica Ippoliti – Appoint to the Prevention Council
4. Bart Van de Weghe – Reappointment to the Board of Ethics
5. Affordable Housing Charge review
6. Ethics
  - a. Fracking Waste Petition – Acknowledgement of receipt and Set up Public Hearing
7. Approval of Minutes from 11/13/2018 Special BOS
8. Fire Department’s proposal to replace an old vehicle
9. Selectman’s Report
  - a. Renewable Energy and Small Town Charm

R. Marconi called the **Board of Selectmen’s Meeting** to order at 6:38 pm.

R. Marconi announced there will be a break at 7:30 pm for a Town Meeting and Public Hearing to discuss two items. The two items are:

- 1- Modifications to the Town of Ridgefield Pension Ordinance
- 2- Modifications made to the Town of Ridgefield Peddlers Ordinance

1. Public Comment

Sanjay Tripathi, of 78 Canterbury Lane, Ridgefield, CT presented a problem concerning his new neighbor’s addition of large solar panels for the use of renewable energy. The panels were not typically installed on the roof; the panels were instead installed on his neighbor’s lawn and are each 30 feet by 20 feet. He explained that this should be a town concern because it can so easily be done again. S. Tripathi further said that as result of these structures, he had an appraisal done on his property value, which decreased the value of his home by 20—25 percent. He also stated that such structures would hurt “the charm of the town.” He requests that there be an ordinance implemented that rationally addresses the installation of such renewable energy structures. Several friends and neighbors of S. Tripathi expressed their concerns and unfairness of the structures. Most neighbors described these structures as “factory”-like. S. Tripathi mentioned a 9-month town ordinance passed in West Hartford

regarding the same issue in which structures were limited to 10 feet in height and limits were placed on the square footage such installations could occupy.

B. Hebert asked S. Tripathi to see the appraisal.

R. Marconi stated that this is a land use issue. The permit to construct was allowable by the zoning regulations. He also mentioned that it was a PRD, a Planned Residential Development, issue, which means it reduces the setbacks. R. Marconi further said that the structures violated no legal regulations. He added that the zoning department may take a look at this issue but that it would be their decision.

After attempting to apply for an appeal with planning and zoning, S. Tripathi realized that move would be to no avail because the solar panels violated no laws and were legal. S. Tripathi then presented the BOS with pictures of the structures and granted permission to the BOS to visit his home to get a better look at the structures.

R. Marconi said that there are two things that can be done: 1) modifications to the regulations of the zoning committee, or 2) an ordinance. He further said that a modification would be a step moving forward and that an ordinance, which would be quicker, would be a law. In order to address these possibilities, there would need to be a Public Hearing and a Town Meeting to discuss the issue.

B. Herbert inquired about the option to reposition the structures so that they did not obstruct the view and are also not in such close proximity to S. Tripathi's home.

R. Marconi responded that yes, the structures could be moved but that it might affect the effectiveness of the panels to absorb the most sunlight.

R. Marconi added an item regarding replacing a vehicle for the Fire Department to the night's agenda.

**R. Marconi moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to add an item to the night's Agenda regarding the Fire Department's proposal to replace an old vehicle. Motion carried 4-0.**

## 2. BOE—Enrollment Projections Update 2018—2019

Present: New Chair of the Board of Education Margaret Stamatis, Vice Chair Doug Silver, Superintendent JeanAnn Paddyfote, and Tracey O'Connor

A few BOE members attended the meeting and referenced a report concerning the enrollment projections for Ridgefield schools. The report is available online.

Doug Silver, Vice Chair, emphasized that the projections in this report are very accurate. D. Silver also mentioned that based on the schools the values of homes can be accessed.

R. Marconi stated that BOS needs some time to digest the report, but also asked D. Silver to provide an idea as to the enrollment decreases and/or increases. D. Silver mentioned that enrollment has been decreasing, but that it has hit its bottom.

D. Silver mentioned space, and that space included a needed paraprofessional, and other staff that would be needed to help special needs children and other matters of the like.

3. Erica Ippoliti -- Appoint to the Prevention Council

R. Marconi welcomed E. Ippoliti to interview with the BOS. R. Marconi read a letter written by E. Ippoliti expressing her desire to join the Prevention Council. She wants to continue to be involved in the community. She has been to two meetings so far. E. Ippoliti wants to help bridge the gap between 5th grade and middle school in terms of education regarding early age drinking and drugs issues. She would like to see a speaker speak to a fifth grade class because they are exposed to certain relevant topics at even this early of an age. This has never really been done. B. Herbert asked if she had any special skill set that would qualify her for the Prevention Council. She stated that as a certified elementary teacher she can provide a perspective that would be appropriate and insightful for Prevention Council matters to address students at that early of an age.

**B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded the motion to appoint Erica Ippoliti to the Prevention Council. Motion carried 4-0.**

4. Bart Van de Weghe – Reappointment to the Board of Ethics

R. Marconi mentioned that there is an ordinance regarding ethics that has been passed through a few hands and that he would like to bring that item to the Board of Ethics of Ridgefield and to B. Van de Weghe.

B. Van de Weghe mentioned that the issues common to the Board of Ethics in the past are essentially the same as in present day. He also stated that there has not been in uptake in the volume of issues. He further said that the issues have been handled similarly over the years and with the same kind of result. He added that there are two types of matters: seeking an advisory opinion and making a complaint. He added that the Board of Ethics is very important because of its objectivity.

**M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to reappoint Bart Van de Weghe to the Board of Ethics. Motion carried 4-0.**

R. Marconi broke the regular meeting at 7:30 pm for a **Public Hearing**.

R. Marconi mentioned that The Peddlers Ordinance and The Pension Ordinance will be discussed in both the Public Hearing and the Town Meeting.

Chris Christiansen discussed the consolidation and changes of documents pertaining to the Pension Ordinance. The changes are meant to update and revise what is actually being done, but are not substantial. Highlights of the changes are to consolidate the four documents of the original Pension Ordinance. The town is the entity that is in charge of the pensions, whereas the Pension Committee deals with the budget funds. Handouts were made available.

Alexander Copp, an attorney from Cohen and Wolf, discussed changes regarding obtaining a permit and the Peddlers Ordinance, which addressed specifics regarding door-to-door solicitations and any relevant exceptions such as non-for-profits.

R. Marconi emphasized that the bottom line is no retail sales are permitted door-to-door, with the exception of The Girls Scouts and other things like that.

The issue of sales by local farmers was posed by John Katz, of 473 Ridgebury Road, Ridgefield, CT. Produce from local farmers and any farmers is considered an exception.

R. Marconi closed the **Public Hearing** at 7:42 pm.

He called a **Town Meeting** at 7:43 pm.

R. Marconi adjourned the **Town Meeting** at 7:48 pm and called to resume the BOS meeting.

#### 5. Affordable Housing Charge review

There are currently five applicants. Interviews with all applicants are on hold until December 12, 2018, and the item was put on the agenda for that date. B. Manners expressed an interest in allowing the BOE more time to read the reports on the candidates before voting. There was no public comment.

**No Vote**

#### 6. Ethics

##### a. Fracking Waste Petition – Acknowledgement of receipt and Set up Public Hearing

R. Marconi mentions the Fracking Waste Petition received 400 signatures, and that it needs to be set on the agenda within 45 days after receipt.

B. Manners proposed the idea of having a Public Hearing.

R. Macaroni referenced the pamphlet regarding the issue.

M. Kozlark posed the question if an attorney should be present at the Public Hearing scheduled for 1/5/2019 in order to address any questions. It was agreed that would be a good idea, especially for the public.

**B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to hold a Town Meeting on 1/9/19 at 7:30 pm in the Large Conference Room of Town Hall to approve an ordinance regarding the Fracking Waste Petition. Motion carried 4-0.**

**B. Manners moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to hold a Public Hearing on Saturday, 1/5/19 at 10 am in Town Hall for approval of an ordinance regarding the Fracking Waste Petition. Motion carried 4-0.**

Kristen of RACE asked to research and provide more information regarding the solar panel issue.

#### 7. Approval of Minutes from 11/13/2018 Special BOS

Slight changes to the 11/13/2018 notes were discussed and agreed upon.

**B. Hebert moved and R. Marconi seconded the motion to approve the modified 11/13/2018 Special BOS Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 4-0.**

**8. Fire Department's proposal to replace an old vehicle**

The Fire Department needs to replace one of their vehicles and is looking to use funds from 2 sources: Operating Account and Capital Account, totally \$21,524. The purchase buyout would be for a 2016 Ford Explorer, which is currently a lease buyout for the Police Department.

B. Hebert asked about the budget and if the new vehicle purchase would be in the 2019 budget. It will part of next year's budget.

**B. Hebert moved and B. Manners seconded the motion to approve the Fire Department's proposal to replace an old vehicle and use budget funds to obtain another vehicle from the Police Department. Motion carried 4-0.**

**9. Selectman's Report**

**a. Renewable Energy and Small Town Charm**

R. Marconi reminded everyone that there are no illegalities concerning the structures.

B. Manners mentioned that size and placement of these types of structures should be addressed.

R. Marconi said that the BOS needs to learn more about the regulations of such structures, especially if they are looking into passing an ordinance and making the home owner with the structures aware that this is being looked into.

BOS is considering visiting Canterbury Lane to observe the solar panels.

**R. Marconi moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 8:38 pm. Motion carried 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa M. Ackerly