

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD – BOARD of SELECTMEN
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING – FEBRUARY 16, 2017

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM – 3:00 P.M.

APPROVED MINUTES

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

In attendance: R. Marconi, R. Hebert, M. Kozlark, S. Zemo
 K. Redmond, Director of Finance

Agenda

1. Possible Discussion of ACT and BassamFellows Leases of Former Schlumberger Property
2. Engineering Budget
3. Information Technology Budget
4. Fire Department Budget
5. General Budget Discussion

R. Marconi called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

1. Possible Discussion of ACT and BassamFellows Leases at Former Schlumberger Property

R. Marconi explained questions were asked during the public hearing by Andy Behymer. Research was done with legal review, and the proposed changes are in front of the Board of Selectmen for approval. The Town Attorney confirmed the changes are not substantive. If the changes are approved, the revised leases will be posted on the Town website.

ACT lease changes—re-entry language was deleted; mechanic’s lien language—move to discharge the lien; holdover section—added \$2,000 per month.

BassamFellows lease changes—

- Re-entry language was deleted;

- Language was added to the alterations section—*‘plans for which are to be submitted to Landlord for approval’* clarifies the Town must review the plans before alterations are made; - - - Holdover section—the rent shall be twice the rent for Option Term #1.

M. Kozlark moved to approve the changes to both the ACT and BassamFellows leases, B. Hebert seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Chuck Hancock of 480 North Street asked for clarification of the BassamFellows holdover section. Is Option Term #1 \$1? R. Marconi replied this can be found on page 12 of the lease.

2. Engineering Budget

Charlie Fisher came forward to discuss the Engineering budget, starting with a discussion of the Richard Venus building, and then followed by a review of painting & carpentry of the exterior Highway Department building. The recycling center/transfer station fencing has been damaged and is in need of repair. S. Zemo asked whether fencing could be replaced by trees? Or perhaps replace it with black fence? C. Fisher will look at it for next year's budget. S. Zemo asked about the Goodwill trailer—would we look at moving it into the recycling area? Perhaps an alternate site that's safer. The fuel depot is in need of work—it is in 2019 budget year for \$300,000; this may be a good time to address moving the Goodwill trailer. Fencing would be a small component of that—we would install black vinyl.

Discussion moved on to the Fire Department building. The thought is to cut out the interior bay floor where it is settled and pour in new concrete. The low bidder on the Highway Department floor will be brought in to pour the floor at the fire station after Highway cuts the floor. R. Marconi stated some of the fire station drains are tied in to the WPCA lateral—Charlie will discuss with WPCA and address this issue.

M. Kozlark asked about the work that must be done at the Schlumberger property for the lease—site surveying, design, engineering, construction documents—to bring forward to P&Z. A special appropriation will be necessary for this. The original estimate from Milone & Macbroom was very high; the second estimate from another company is \$25,000 less. If we can use the money from contingency, that would be the preferred route.

ERMS roof repairs—a bid was received to repair seams in the roof to prolong its life 10-15 years. R. Marconi asked about a solar roof—is it a good roof for this building? C. Fisher stated his concern about snow load and drifting. We go out after every major snow storm to inspect the roofs, clean the drains, and remove the snow if necessary.

School sidewalks and the RHS courtyard are disintegrating because of the salt used to melt snow and ice. To repair this will cost \$106,000. Discussion ensued about the impact that a coat of paint makes; this is a cost-effective way of keeping buildings tidy and presentable. Is there anyone that has a slow time that can be utilized for this? Perhaps an assessment of the buildings can be done. We can look at this like a maintenance schedule—we have to be careful about this because the BOF may want to put it in the operating budget.

Tiger Hollow stairway construction. Last year we replaced the stairs at the top of the descent to the field. We must look at the lower section of the descent. We are being proactive to address this. Precast concrete would be used—not railroad ties.

Lake Windwing dam repairs -- \$90,000 will be used to address repairs this year; the Shadow Lake dam item was put off until next year (\$350,000). Dam emergency action plans—the state

has ordered all dam owners to address their dam emergency action plans. Evacuation plans must be made—there is no emergency at this time but we must have a plan.

Discussion about the Mamasasco Lake dam and the history about the previous owner who refused to allow MLIF to repair it. M. Kozlark will investigate whether the new owner would allow access for repair.

Storm drainage study—Casagmo expressed concern about drainage issues. This study would look at the entire downtown area to investigate flow rates and then develop plans to correct issues.

LOCIP money—we are not sure what is happening there. We probably won't know until June. We received notice in late December that the money was put on hold. R. Marconi stated the Governor's budget does restore LOCIP---not only \$180,000 but would bump it up to \$250,000. Until we receive notice, we can remove the grant offset in the budget. If we don't have LOCIP, how do we phrase the question to the voters? We can still bond it if we don't receive LOCIP money—the money is phrased this way. If we don't get the money from the state, then we don't go forward with the project.

TOD (Transportation-oriented Development) grant—if we get the grant we will have to match 20% which is \$180,000. The LOTCIP grant (\$1.2M) will have to be revised—it was originally written for going down Farmingville Road. We hope to be in the final design phase and ready to go out to bid by next budget cycle.

Basically we are not going to be able to do any more sidewalks. C. Fisher's next project was going to be the sidewalks in front of Casagmo. The sidewalk on Grove Street by Casagmo would be another good area, but there is an easement situation. New Street residents submitted a petition two years ago for a sidewalk. The problem there is whether there is enough room as well as getting permission from property owners. We have also had requests from residents on West Lane. S. Zemo asked about how important is the walkability of our town? Maybe we will have to include something in our budget to address sidewalks.

B. Hebert asked about painting up at the Venus building—the entrance to the old VNA is in need. C. Fisher went out to bid on the exterior of the building—landscaping and sidewalks. This will be addressed this spring. We want to keep Chefs Warehouse happy.

The Engineering Operating budget reflects a 1.9% increase. The MS4 work is reflected in the increase.

The Schlumberger Sky Dome building was vandalized; copper tubing was stolen. It is a very dangerous area—1,000 amps of electricity. The Town intends to use the building as a storage facility. S. Zemo stated that perhaps security cameras should be installed?

3. Information Technology Budget

Present for the discussion was Andrew Neblett, IT Department Head and Kevin Redmond, Director of Finance.

A. Neblett is requesting a new network and back-up server - two servers that deliver email. How long do we have to keep email? There is no definite ruling on this. He stated how he has four layers of protection. He wants to be sure that the backup works.

Operations – Cost for the core IT account has gone up by \$5,000. Sensors went up in cost; taxes went up; he pointed out what is static. The overall budget is up 1%. R. Marconi asked about a part-time person to do “minor” work – at \$75,000. If dollars are not a problem, then he prefers to have a person scheduled two to three days/week. Looking at 16 to 20 hours/week. R. Hebert stated how he is an advocate of this. By enhancing the number of hours, the IT program will give us efficiencies all the way down the line. We save a lot by building up the infrastructure. We do not want to fall behind technology-wise.

4. Fire Department

Acting Fire Chief Jerry Myers discussed Capital expenses. They are on a five year rotation. A 4 x 4 chassis truck was just delivered last year. All-wheel drive is good to have. Like to have four-wheel drive but otherwise just keep what we have and go with it. We get an ambulance every five years and will then get one with four-wheel drive. Purchaser is coming from Oklahoma to pick up our old vehicle on Monday.

We are doing an inspection this year – it is required every ten years. Discussion of fire station replacement ensued – when do we want to relocate. Do we want to abandon the old station? It is all basically guess work. We need to figure out what we want to do. We need to do a study and define a scope. We need to know what the Police want.

S. Zemo stated we want a number for this year’s budget. We need a number to renovate the downstairs. We need to be able to shower and need to put in for a clothes dryer. What about central air upstairs? What expenditures before we possibly move? Do we plan to gut the building in 3-5 years? We do not want to do anything on Main Street until next year.

We want to save dollars but we don’t want to sacrifice any calls. Discussion ensued about how the eight-man minimum works. The night shift starts at 8:00 p.m.

J. Myers indicated we have a very happy department right now. For the most part, all is on track. We have an atmosphere of overall good will. Looking at the Chief position and have decided to keep it on as a vacancy. We can adjust the cost and give the men more compensation. There is a bigger pool from within right now. Possibly the Captains are more responsive. The Captains manage the Department from 4 p.m. to 8 a.m. They are acting more like managers than supervisors. The individual people can then step up. We have had Laurie Fernandez build a model. We can look at it. Does this save us money?

5. General Budget Discussion – It was decided to put off further discussion until a later time.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to adjourn the Budget Meeting at 6:35 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet L. Johnson