



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Regular & Budget Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED

March 1, 2023 at 7:30pm

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

Present: Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Bob Hebert, Sean Connelly (via zoom), Barbara Manners (via zoom)

1. Public Comment

There were no public comments

2. Ridgefield Police Department Budget

Police Chief Jeff Kreitz, Major Shawn Platt and Police Commissioner John Frey were in attendance. Kevin Redmond, Director of Finance gave an overview of the budget. The topics that were discussed included:

- The new pick-up truck for animal control
- Tri-band radios to be included in the next budget. The current radios work great however in the future, they might need to upgrade to easily communicate with other towns.
- Police motorcycle – The PD has not had one in years, however Chief Kreitz thinks it would be beneficial if possible.
- Bicycle Patrol – mostly used for concerts in the park, the Halloween walk and town events, and only when officers are available.
- Speed signs – these have been working great and providing lots of data to the PD.
- Stationary License Plate Readers (LPRs) – this item was presented in detail at the February budget meeting. They are about \$5,000 per piece.

3. Parks & Rec Budget

Redmond provided an overview of the budget. The increases in operating expenses are due to utilities, programs, salaries, and maintenance/supplies. The Parks & Rec's revenues exceed their expenses. Dennis Dipinto, Director of Parks & Rec, commented that membership is growing toward pre-covid numbers and the programs are exceeding those numbers.

The budget items that were discussed included:

- The jump in office supply expenses in 2021
- The 5-year plan involving bathroom upgrades at Martin Park
- Sinking funds – should the cost be increased over time to accommodate for inflation? It is hard to predict when the fields will need updating so the balance usually comes out of the capital budget.
- Skate Park updates – there is nothing in the 5-year plan. It is in decent shape, however outdated. A redesign is a big undertaking.
- The increase in wages for part-time and seasonal staff and the challenges with finding Camp Counselors and Lifeguards.
- Spin Studio upgrade to a bigger space will happen toward the end of the year.
- Phase 2 funding for the basketball courts at Yanity Gym

There was a discussion about the WPCA truck that needs to be fixed or replaced, what the costs might be and who would pay for it.

4. Tax Collector Refunds

Maureen Kozlark moved to approve the tax collector refunds in the amount of \$11,636.36. Bob Hebert second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

5. Selectman's Report

There have been discussions regarding the new radios included in the Fire Department 5-year plan. First Selectman Rudy Marconi consulted with Dick Aarons, Director of Emergency Management. One idea is to assign a radio to each vehicle rather than each firefighter. More discussions will be held.

Marconi passed around the new Moody's scorecard. Moody's is the credit rating company that the Town uses. Recently Moody's added two new areas to their scoring which prompted a low rating warning for Ridgefield. There was a discussion about fund balance and the town's ability to generate revenue. The Board of Education will be receiving an estimated \$1 million refund which will go into fund balance. There is unused money from the town budget that will be returned to fund balance as well.

There will be five budgets to vote on at tomorrow night's meeting. The Board needs to decide if they will approve the request for two additional personnel to the Police Department. There was a discussion about the benefits to spacing out the hiring over two years and the need to consider personnel requests in other departments.

There may be the need for a 3rd ambulance with staff due to increased medical calls and the possibility of a new assisted living facility in town.

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Maureen Kozlark moved to approve the January 18, 2023 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Minutes as amended. Sean Connelly second the motion. Barbara Manners abstained. Motion carries 4-0-1.

Sean Connelly moved to approve the February 15, 2023 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting Minutes as amended. Maureen Kozlark second the motion. Rudy Marconi and Bob Hebert abstained. Motion carries 3-0-2.

Maureen Kozlark moved to approve the February 15, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes as amended. Sean Connelly second the motion. Bob Hebert abstained. Motion carries 4-0-1.

7. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote

No vote was taken

Maureen Kozlark moved to adjourn the March 1, 2023 Board of Selectmen meeting at 9:45pm. Bob Hebert second the motion. Motion carries 5-0.