

Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting
Wednesday, April 4, 2018 - 7:30 pm
Town Hall (Large Conference Room)
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut
APPROVED 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, B. Manners, S. Zemo, M. Kozlark

Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on April 4, 2018 at 7:30pm in the Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to receive comment on the proposed sale of Town of Ridgefield-owned property on Ledges Road, Ridgefield CT, more specifically identified as D08-0003.

R. Marconi called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30pm.

R. Marconi invited Ben Oko, Member of Ridgefield Conservation Commission to give a brief overview on the proposed sale of Town of Ridgefield-owned property on Ledges Road.

B. Oko came forward and showed a map of the property on Ledges Road to the public. B. Oko stated that when the land was purchased in 2012, Conservation Commission introduced an amendment saying that the Commission has the right to sell the land with Town approval. At the time, it was voted and approved. The Conservation Commission has decided to sell the land because they are interested in purchasing another property. There are some contingencies before the land can be sold. Planning and Zoning needs to approve the sale. And a new subdivision needs to be created to confirm that the land is sellable.

R. Marconi asked if there are any comments from the public.

Paul Garbarino, 187 Barlow Mountain Road, asked where exactly the part of the land that is for sale is located, in relation to the intersection of Ledges Road with Ridgebury and Barlow Mountain Road. B. Oko explained the land is located closer to Ridgebury Road.

John Katz, Ridgebury Road and P&Z member, explained Planning and Zoning Commission does not have to approve the sale. Planning and Zoning Commission must know about it, must review it and decide whether to vote in favor of it.

R. Marconi read the letter that was sent to Richard Baldelli, Director of Planning and Zoning on March 13, 2018, regarding Ledges Road property.

Jessica Wilmot - 39 Pond Road, asked if it's a single dwelling property. R. Marconi and B. Oko confirmed it is a single dwelling property.

Debra Franceschini – 72 Spire View Road, asked about the location of the new property the commission is interested to purchase. R. Marconi stated its in process of negotiation and it's not yet public.

Ellen Burns, 297 Great Hill Road, from the public asked if there is any environmental significance for the Town to hold on to this property. B. Oko stated the property does not have any environmental significance because its locked in from both sides by houses.

Donald Bostwick, lives on the corner of Sherwood and Ledges Road, explained that during the time the two houses across the street from his property were built (a process of 6 months), the machines that were used were very loud and it restricted him from using his outside area. Donald asked if there is recourse for a resident and should there be something included in the sale that would make it more amenable for the residents around the property by restricting the use of these loud pieces of equipment. R. Marconi explained if the property were to be approved, Town Meeting would include restrictions.

Paul Garbarino asked how much the property is selling for. R. Marconi explained that the property is not on the market; the sign posted is for the Public Hearing, which is required by state statute.

R. Marconi closed the Public Hearing Meeting at 7:47pm

Agenda

1. Public Comment
2. Friends of Ridgefield: a) Board Interview -Jane Berendsen-Hill;
b) Board Reappointments; c) Ridgefield Marketing Initiative -Joy Maini, Wayne Addressi
3. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview -Michaela Kane
4. Commission on Aging Interview – Debra Ann Franceschini
5. Reappointments: Commission on Aging – Marion Freer, Mary Morrisroe
Conservation Commission – Jim Coyle, Eric Beckenstein
Commission on the Disabled – Sharol Signorelli
Parking Authority – Ellen Burns, Robert Murphy, Jessica Wilmot
Parks & Recreation Commission – Kim Hulber
6. Deer Management Implementation Committee review of 2017-2018 Controlled Hunt
7. Lakeside Drive Land Donation (Orlando Romeo)
8. Schlumberger Phase II Use of Contingency
9. Proposed Fracking Ban Ordinance – Set Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting Dates
10. HART 13b Certification
11. Selectman's Report
12. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/21/18 special, 2/21/18 regular, 3/5/18 budget, 3/6/18 budget, 3/8/18 regular and budget.

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectman Meeting to order at 7:47 pm.

B. Hebert moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to add to the evening's agenda as item #10a - Budget question groupings that were approved by the Board of Finance. Motion Carried 5-0.

1. Public Comment

R. Marconi asked if anybody from the public would like to comment.

Scott DeYoung, Caudatowa Drive, stated that the date for the Public Hearing for The Proposed Fracking Ban can be pushed into June.

2. Friends of Ridgefield

a) Board Interview -Jane Berendsen-Hill and b) Board Reappointments

J. Berendsen-Hill came forward to present herself to the Board. R. Marconi stated J. Berendsen-Hill expressed her interested to volunteer as a member of Friends of Ridgefield. BOS thanks her for that. S. Zemo asked if J. Berendsen-Hill would act as a Treasurer? The answer was Yes. M. Kozlark stated J. Berendsen-Hill is a great choice and she highly recommends appointing her. B. Hebert stated he supports appointing J. Berendsen-Hill as a member of Friends of Ridgefield. R. Marconi read a letter from Barbara Serfilippi where she recommends Jane Berendsen-Hill to be appointed a member of Friends of Ridgefield.

S. Zemo moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to appoint Jane Berendsen-Hill as a member of Friends of Ridgefield and reappoint Barbara Serfilippi and Barbara Manners on the Friends of Ridgefield for another one-year term. Motion carried 5-0.

c) Ridgefield Marketing Initiative -Joy Maini, Wayne Addressi

Joy Maini, Cohen & Wolf attorney, Wayne Addressi, owner of Addressi Jewelers, and attorney Bob Jewell came forward to discuss the request to add the Ridgefield Marketing Initiative to the 501c3, Friends of Ridgefield. J. Maini stated that the purpose of this organization is to support the Town in activities such as recreation programs, education, conservation activities and other functions that promote the Town. The Ridgefield Marketing Initiative meets all the criteria to be a part of the 501c3, Friends of Ridgefield.

W. Addressi stated Ridgefield Marketing Initiative has collected \$50,000 in private donations so far to promote the town.

B. Manners as a Friends of Ridgefield Board Member stated that she does not feel comfortable with adding Ridgefield Marketing Initiative under the Friends umbrella. This is an independent effort and Friends of Ridgefield does not want this to interfere with their fundraising. B. Manners stated that Ridgefield Marketing initiative belongs in its own 501c3.

B. Jewell and R. Marconi explained that Ridgefield Marketing Initiative is asking to join 501c3 temporarily to make sure the organization will work. During this time, the organization will work toward getting its own 501c3. Joining Friends of Ridgefield will help the organization get off the ground to help benefit the general good of the Town.

B. Manners stated that if it is temporary and there is a commitment to start working on their own 501c3, she feels comfortable with it. But it needs to be clarified that Ridgefield Marketing Initiative is raising funds for their own operations.

M. Kozlark stated that there are organizations that have been under the Friends of Ridgefield Umbrella for a while and are not required to form their own 501c3. There should be a requirement for these organizations. B. Manners stated that these organizations have sponsors within the town. R. Marconi stated that if these organizations are not 501c3 at this point, and they continue to function under the Umbrella, the organizations should be notified that they need to seek 501c3 status or we can't continue to support them.

S. Zemo asked what's the goal of the organization in terms of getting the 501c3. W. Addressi stated that the organization is hoping to get approved for the 501c3, so they can continue to raise funds. The goal is to raise \$100,000 for this year to create a website and continue with the work.

M. Kozlark asked if this is going to be a scholarship where people can apply. W. Addressi stated that the organization has hired a marketing firm that works with the committee on creating a strategy on how to market the Town.

S. Zemo moved and M. Kozlark seconded a motion to approve the Ridgefield Marketing Initiative to be part of Friends of Ridgefield for a period of one year and recommend to the Board of Friends of Ridgefield to accept the initiative. Motion Carried 5-0.

3. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview - Michaela Kane

M. Kane came forward to introduce herself to the Board. M. Kane is a freshman at Ridgefield High School and is interested in becoming a member of the Ridgefield Prevention Council. M. Kane stated she would like to join the Prevention Council so that she can bring the youth perspective to the council. S. Zemo asked if M. Kane has time to dedicate to the council. The answer was Yes. B. Manners asked if the Council has taken up the issues of vaping. M. Kane stated prevention council is working on that. R. Marconi informed all what vaping is and the issue of vaping.

M. Kozlark asked what are some things that the youth can bring to the council that would make a difference. M. Kane stated the council was not aware of many things that were happening at the High School. The issue of vaping was one of them, as well as other concerns.

M. Kozlark asked if the Council is working with school administrators/faculty and if more students will join. M. Kane stated the Council has tried to reach out to school administrators before, but they were told they cannot fit in their schedule. Just recently, the Prevention Council partnered with the Student Government. M. Kane stated she is working on recruiting more students to join the Prevention Council. B. Hebert asked if the Council is discussing potential solutions. M. Kane stated Council is discussing the possibility of guest speakers, Drug-Driving and bringing back the Mock Car Crash. R. Marconi and Police Chief John Roche informed attendees about the Mock Car Crash simulation.

Debra Franceschini from the public asked if the Prevention Council is working to reach out to lower grades, other than the high school on the vaping issue. The answer was Yes.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to appoint Michaela Kane to the Ridgefield Prevention Council. Motion Carried 5-0.

4. Commission on Aging Interview – Debra Ann Franceschini

Debra Ann Franceschini came forward to introduce herself to the Board. R. Marconi read the letter in which D. Franceschini expressed her interest in joining the Commission on Aging. D. Franceschini serves as a Board Member of Meals on Wheels and does outreach work and events with the elderly population. S. Zemo asked if D. Franceschini will be able to attend meetings. The answer was Yes. M. Kozlark asked if D. Franceschini has any thoughts or ideas on working to group the elderly together. D. Franceschini stated she has been attending meetings and has been getting ideas on how to help the elderly. Chris Robertson, Commission on Aging Chairperson, stated D. Franceschini has been great and has been doing a lot of things for the Commission.

S. Zemo moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to appoint Debra Ann Franceschini to the Commission on Aging. Motion Carried 5-0.

5. Reappointments:

Commission on Aging – Marion Freer, Mary Morrisroe

Marion Freer and Mary Morrisroe came forward to introduce themselves to the Board. R. Marconi read a letter from M. Freer and M. Morrisroe in which they express their interest in being reappointed for another term to the Commission on Aging. R. Marconi gave a brief overview on the RUOK program that is working out of the Fire House. Commission on Aging has a list of people that they call every day and check on them.

B. Hebert asked how often they have to dispatch and who do they dispatch? M. Morrisroe stated there are times when they have to dispatch often and there are times when they don't dispatch at all. It's hard to tell how often. We get in touch with a contact who is chosen by the person. It can be a neighbor, friend or family member. If we can't reach anybody then we notify the Police and Fire Department to do a wellness visit.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to reappoint Marion Freer and Mary Morrisroe to the Commission on Aging. Motion Carried 5-0.

Conservation Commission – Jim Coyle, Eric Beckenstein

Jim Coyle and Eric Beckenstein came forward to introduce themselves to the Board. R. Marconi read the letters from J. Coyle and E. Beckenstein in which they express their desire to continue to serve on the Conservation Commission. J. Coyle stated he has been working with a wonderful group of people and he is happy to continue to serve on the Commission. E. Beckenstein stated the Commission has been working on a lot of things and he would like to continue with the Conservation Commission.

M. Kozlark asked if the Commission still rotates Chairman. J. Coyle stated the Commission did that for some time in the past, but the Commission decided to stop it since J. Coyle became Chairman.

B. Manners asked if the Ranger Program is set for the summer. J. Coyle stated the program runs all year around, but it is busier during the summer.

R. Marconi asked if the property on Ledges Road sells, could any of that money be used towards maintenance of open land and trees on Conservation land? J. Coyle stated the Commission has been taking care of the trees. Just in the past year, Conservation Commission took care of 45 trees and will continue to do so

S. Zemo asked if the Commission is working on any new program for this year. E. Beckenstein stated a Tree Count program is starting in the Spring, where they count and group different types of trees.

S. Zemo moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to reappoint Jim Coyle and Eric Beckenstein to the Conservation Commission for another term. Motion Carried 5-0.

Commission for the Disabled - Sharol Signorelli

Sharol Signorelli is not present. Donald Ciota, Chairman of Commission on the Disabled, came forward to answer Board questions. R. Marconi read the letter in which Sharol Signorelli expressed her desire to continue to serve on the Commission for another term.

D. Ciota stated Sharol is very active and has been doing a lot of work for the Commission on the Disabled and informed the Board about the Town-Wide Assessment project which is a requirement under the American with Disabilities Act. The bid for Town-Wide Assessment was won by the Institute for Human

Centered Design out of Boston. The Institute will assess all Town properties, including the schools. Sharol has been great helping with this project and the Commission would like to continue to have her for another term.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to reappoint Sharol Signorelli to the Commission for the Disabled for another term. Motion Carried 5-0.

R. Marconi stated that Edwin Pearson who was a member of the Commission for the Disabled passed away on Thursday, March 29, 2018. His wife Cloris Pearson also passed away on April 3, 2018. Services will be held April 5, 2018 from 12:30pm-3pm at the Ridgefield Library.

Parking Authority – Ellen Burns, Robert Murphy, Jessica Wilmot

Ellen Burns, Robert Murphy and Jessica Wilmot came forward to introduce themselves to the Board. R. Marconi stated that BOS and Board of Finance approved the parking lot extension on Governor St. J. Wilmot stated the Parking Authority is working on the new parking lot leases; they are delayed until June. The Parking Authority is also working on having color-coded permits.

E. Burns stated shoppers should be in the closest parking areas, and employees should park in the further parking areas. Parking Authority has to figure out how many employees need to be accommodated. We have to work with the landlords to figure out how to optimize and compromise between what their total demand would be.

S. Zemo asked if the Parking Authority has any thoughts in educating the public as to the need for the lot. People need to be aware that there is a need for extra parking. E. Burns stated people who go into town once a week are not getting the full picture. We are working to accumulate extra parking spots.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to reappoint Ellen Burns, Robert Murphy and Jessica Wilmot to the Parking Authority for another term. Motion Carried 5-0.

Parks & Recreation Commission – Kim Hulber

Kim Hulber came forward to introduce herself to the Board. R. Marconi read the letter in which K. Hulber expressed her desire to continue to serve on the Parks & Recreation Commission. R. Marconi then read a letter from Philip Kearns, Chairman of Parks & Recreation Commission expressing his support for K. Hulber's request.

B. Hebert asked what's the 5 or 10-year vision for Parks and Rec? K. Hulber stated the Commission is working on communication in general about what Parks and Recs does for the community. Some of other things included in the Parks and Rec vision are bike and hiking trails, more parking, and training for the employees.

B. Manners asked if the space for public meetings is being utilized. K. Hulber stated Parks & Rec is working on making people more aware of what is available. B. Manners suggested Parks & Rec charge a yearly permit fee for the Dog Park. Free for the Residents of Ridgefield, \$25 for people out of Town to raise funds to help pay for maintenance expenses for the Dog Park.

B. Hebert moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to reappoint Kim Hulber to the Parks & Recreation Commission for another term. Motion Carried 5-0.

6. Deer Management Implementation Committee review of 2017-2018 Controlled Hunt

Stefano Zandri, Police Chief John Roche, Stephen Scala and Paul Payne came forward to discuss and review 2017-2018 Controlled Hunt.

S. Zandri stated last year was a very good year considering three occurrences that had a negative impact on the Controlled Hunt--the delay of the notices in the Ridgefield Press, Restrictions that were put on the golf course, and losing one of the most productive property. According to the State of Connecticut, the Town of Ridgefield took 180 deer in total. The Committee took a total of 60 deer, or 30%.

In the past ten years, our town has been in the first 4 in reported kills. This year we dropped to number 9. In Deer Vehicle Collisions, Ridgefield went from being number 1 in the state to number 21. We are making progress. Deer herd numbers are stable.

R. Marconi asked what's the understory like. S. Zandri stated not sure.

R. Marconi asked if the Committee thinks there is a need to continue hunting now that the numbers are stable. S. Zandri stated there are three options. We leave deer hunting the way it is. If we want to further reduce deer population, we need more access to property and if we end hunting deer, the herd will continue to grow.

Chief of Police gave statistics on Deer car collisions. From April of 2000-May 2005 there were 883 Deer car collisions. From 2013- 2017 there were 183 Deer car accidents. The numbers have substantially decreased.

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to pass the 2018-2019 Deer Hunt Properties List on to the Conservation Committee for further discussion and recommendations for the BOS. Motion Carried 4-0-1, with B. Manners abstaining.

7. Lakeside Drive Land Donation (Orlando Romeo) – Conservation Committee didn't have a chance to look at it. Has been moved in May Agenda

8. Schlumberger Phase II Use of Contingency

Ed Tyrrell, Ellen Burns, Dick Larson, Linda Hanley, Joan Zawacki and Andy Behymer came forward to discuss this topic. The Schlumberger Citizen Committee presented the recommendations of a Culture Option that includes a new theater group in the Auditorium, a modern design organization in the Philip Johnson Building and outdoor venue. D. Larson stated the Committee is requesting \$25,000 to allow putting together materials needed for Planning and Zoning approval. After we have gone through this process, those materials along with the Marketing Plan will be used to raise private funds. Culture Center will become an economic driver for the town.

J. Zawacki stated it has been wonderful working with this group of people. The Committee made data-based decisions.

B. Manners asked if this is the right time to raise funds when the Playhouse is trying to raise funds for renovations and ACT is raising money for the theater. D. Larson stated the Committee is aware of what other fundraising needs exist. The difference is those projects are needed now. Culture Center is probably two years away. And the Committee will start raising funds next year.

M. Kozlark asked if the \$25,000 will give the Committee an idea of how much money they need to raise. D. Larson stated its going to be the start of calculating how much we are going to need.

S. Zemo moved and B. Hebert seconded a motion to allocate \$25,000 from Contingency for the Special Permit Process for the Culture Option of Schlumberger Phase II. Motion Carried 5-0.

Arnold Light, Nursery Rd and ECDC Chairman, stated this is going to be an economic driver for the Town of Ridgefield.

9. Proposed Fracking Ban Ordinance – Set Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting Dates

R. Marconi stated that modifications to the ordinance need to be made. The BOS discussed and decided to wait for the State’s decision before scheduling Public Hearing and Town Meeting dates on the Proposed Fracking Ordinance. B. Hebert stated BOS needs more education on the proposed ordinance before making a decision.

Kristin Quell - from the public stated the language that has been adopted in this ordinance is the same as the one proposed to the State. In the state budget, there was a provision that allowed beneficial use permits to go into commercial and industrial products. If these permits sit for 90 days, they go into legal action. We need to do something to protect our community.

Scott DeYoung – From the public stated the ordinance that has been proposed requires a certification. The ordinance is focused on the origin of the material not its properties. If we are concern about protecting our environment, we should figure out what we are concerned about and prohibit that.

10. HART 13b Certification

S. Zemo moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to approve the Grant Assignment Certification. Motion carried 5-0.

10a Budget Question Grouping

The BOS discussed and approved the proposed grouping of budget questions.

1. Town Expenditure, including debt service
2. BOE expenditures
3. Capital Projects Financing – Road/Infrastructure and ADA
4. Venus Building Reconfiguration and authorization to bond
5. Governor Street Parking and authorization to bond
6. EOC and Sky Dome Building Roof Replacement, Village Storm Drainage, Study and Sidewalks and authorization to bond
7. Mack Truck (Highway) and Pumper Tanker (Fire) and authorization to bond
8. BOE Oil Tank Removal, Asbestos Abatement, HVAC and Technology and Safety Upgrades and authorization to bond

11. Selectman’s Report

1. Comcast is requesting permission to go door to door for solicitation. The Board discussed and the consensus was to deny approval for door to door solicitation. R. Marconi will notify Comcast.
2. Janine Johnson - Scotts Ridge Middle School Library/Media specialist is a recipient of the 2018 American Association School Librarian Collaborative School Library Award

3. The state Marine Corps League is looking for Female Veterans of World War II on Honor of the 100th anniversary military women veterans.
4. Resignations: Wendy Mitchell and Joanne Baird from the Youth Commission

12. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/21/18 special, 2/21/18 regular, 3/5/18 budget, 3/6/18 budget, 3/8/18 regular and budget.

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve as written the 2/21/18 special meeting, 2/21/18 regular meeting, (B. Manners was absent), 3/5/18 budget meeting, 3/6/18 budget meeting, 3/8/18 regular and budget meeting minutes. Motion Carried 4-0-1. (B. Manners abstained)

M. Kozlark moved and B. Hebert seconded the motion to adjourn the BOS meeting at 11pm. Motion Carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nita Asani