

Special Town Meeting July 6, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the large conference room of Town Hall by the First Selectman, Rudy Marconi.

Mr. Marconi asked for a motion to nominate a Moderator. Barbara Manners made the motion to appoint Ed Tyrrell, and it was seconded by a member of the audience.

Vote: A hand vote approved the appointment of Mr. Tyrrell as Moderator.

The people at the meeting recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Tyrrell announced that the first order of business was to appoint a secretary for the meeting. Barbara Manners made a motion to appoint Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk, and it was seconded by Rudy Marconi.

Vote: "Aye" votes unanimous and Ms. Serfilippi was appointed secretary.

Mr. Tyrrell read the legal notice for the meeting, as appears on page 194, to act on the Lease Agreement for the Teen Barn at 6 Governor St., between the Town of Ridgefield, as Lessor, and the Ridgefield Boys & Girls Club as Lessee.

The Moderator asked for a motion to approve. Lori Hongach made the motion, and it was seconded by a member of the audience. The Moderator asked Rudy Marconi to give an overview of the lease, and then opened the floor for discussion.

The First Selectman reported that there was a public hearing on the matter, and the take away from the hearing was that there should be a change on the original lease on page 2, under Second-Use., the last two sentences, to read, "The Barn shall be open two week days for 4 (four) hours each day and on Friday night for extended hours for unstructured programs as are now offered in the Barn. In addition, the Barn will maintain the essence, culture, and basic philosophy as a relaxing destination for young adults."

Mr. Marconi further explained that the Barn has been in existence since 1994. The agreement will maintain the current schedule, open two days a week in the afternoon for 4 hours each day, and extended hours on Friday. The Town will make a contribution of \$65,000 per year, which is the amount the Town allocates each year for the Barn. The Barn is currently in the red, and this is one of the reasons for the agreement to provide sustainability in the situation to allow the Barn to continue in its current makeup and to allow the Boys & Girls Club to possibly expand the hours, continue the program, and maybe provide other programs. The first year the \$65,000 will be reduced, upon review by the Town's finance department, to cover the amount in the red, at a minimum of \$30,000. The purpose of the lease is to allow the Barn to be successful and to provide service to people in the community which they might not otherwise have. It will also allow the longevity of the program, since many other towns teen centers have closed.

Discussion:

Barbara Manners, Round Lake Rd., asked Mr. Marconi to clarify that all the \$65,000 annually would be used specifically to maintain the programs at the Barn as has been and there won't be a diminishing of the funds for basic Barn hours.

Mr. Marconi replied that the Boys & Girls Club will meet with the Board of Selectmen and an annual review will be done. He felt that it was up to the Board of Selectmen.

Marge Courtney, Main St., felt that the two groups will not merge well.

Mike Flynn, Director of Boys & Girls Club, stated their philosophy is to maintain what is there now, and he intends to keep the culture that is there now.

Linda Caponetti, Mimosa Circle, Director of the Barn, stated that the goal of the merger is to maintain the sustainability of the Barn and to avoid drastic change.

Peter Furfaro, 255 West Lane, Chris Cocchi, 24 Summit Lane, & Jeff Bonistalli, were all in favor of the lease.

The Moderator closed discussion, and called for a vote on the approval of the lease.

Vote: "Aye" votes carried. 1 "Nay" vote. Motion Approved

The Moderator asked for a motion to adjourn. Barbara Manners made the motion, and it was seconded by a member of the audience.

Vote: "Aye" votes unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk