



**Town of Ridgefield**  
**Board of Selectpersons Meeting Minutes**  
**UNAPPROVED**

**January 29, 2024 at 7:00pm**

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

**Present:** Rudy Marconi, Maureen Kozlark, Sean Connelly, Barbara Manners, Chris Murray

Rudy Marconi called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**1. General Budget Overview**

Kevin Redmond, Director of Finance, was in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- An overview of the budget, specifically current debt service, borrowing rate, increased prices due to inflation, modest personnel increases, and the fund balance. Non-tax revenues (i.e. Ridgefield Golf Course, Ambulance services, Parks & Recreation) are flat.
- Maureen Kozlark asked about the proposed Police Department and Fire Department (PDFD) facility. Rudy Marconi confirmed the Board of Selectpersons (BoS) is waiting on the estimate, which should be received within the budget cycle.
- Sean Connelly asked about building permits and conveyance. Mr. Redmond shared the actual for 2023 and year-to-date for 2024 are strong for building, conveyance, and reporting could be down, but the forecast is favorable.
- Mr. Connelly asked about pensions. Mr. Redmond confirmed the pension budget is flat to last year, as is the Town of Ridgefield Budget based on the Pension Commission's recommendations.

**2. Library Budget**

Brenda McKinley, Library Director, Carrie Wells, Library Board Chair, and Paul Mellinger were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Ms. McKinley distributed copies of the Library's latest Annual Report to the BoS and shared background on the Library's community engagement and value.
- Mr. Mellinger shared the Library is requesting a 3% budget increase.
- Maureen Kozlark asked about late fees being reduced to \$0 in the budget. Ms. McKinley confirmed most CT libraries are fine-free to promote equity, and the Library is working toward that. The Library's passport services help to offset the elimination of fine income.
- Ms. McKinley shared the two large capital asks for the Library:
  - o Purchasing new public-use laptops for the STEAM Corner and Technology Center
    - Ms. Kozlark asked whether this could be a staggered replacement. Ms. McKinley shared the laptops currently in the Technology Center would be used to replace older computers elsewhere in the Library.

- Chris Murray asked about having laptops donated to the Library. Ms. McKinley shared they apply for restricted grants, which could be used to fund technology support.
- Sean Connelly asked about the price per laptop budgeted compared to Chromebooks. Ms. McKinley confirmed they needed more robust laptops to meet the needs of their programs.
- Upgrading the automated material handling system (AMHS)
  - Ms. McKinley shared this system (\$225,000) would replace the existing AMHS, self-checkout stations, RFID readers for collection maintenance, and would be installed in June 2025.
  - Rudy Marconi asked about trade-in value on old AMHS equipment. Ms. McKinley confirmed it has no value.
  - Ms. Kozlark asked about lead time. Ms. Wells shared it would be 3-4 months, with 1 week on-site to install, test, and train staff.
  - Mr. Connelly asked about physical item checkout numbers. Ms. McKinley shared physical checkouts increased 4% year-over-year and have returned to pre-pandemic numbers.
  - Barbara Manners asked about book delivery to residents. Ms. McKinley shared the Library offers home-bound delivery, and works with senior housing to do bulk deliveries to residents.

### **3. Police Department Budget**

Major Shawn Platt, Chief Jeffery Kreitz, and Police Commissioners Sharon Dornfeld, Ralph Money, and John Frey were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Rudy Marconi asked about increasing vehicle lease terms to 4+ years. Chief Kreitz confirmed Jake Muller, Director of Purchasing, will investigate for next purchase cycle.
- Sean Connelly asked about the budget for police cruisers. Chief Kreitz confirmed RPD is a year behind due to delivery delays, vehicles ordered in 2023 will be received in 2024.
- Maureen Kozlark asked about electric vehicles. Chief Kreitz confirmed he researched this option, but Ford stated their electric vehicles are not ready for police use.
- Mr. Marconi asked about the RPD building. Chief Kreitz shared there was flooding in the basement and roof leaks, plumbing issues, and OSHA-related issues being remedied.
- The BoS discussed a potential new building. Chris Murray asked about length of bonds. Kevin Redmond shared Mr. Marconi and Molly McGeehin, Treasurer, could consider 25-35-year bonds but would likely get better rates with 20-year bonds.
- Chief Kreitz shared the largest capital request: upgrading the current single-band portable radios, which are 10+ years old and no longer supported, with tri-band radios (\$511,638.60) which would allow communication with surrounding communities when they respond to calls outside of Ridgefield. Chief Kreitz shared a map with the BoS showing the different radio bands used in the surrounding area. Some discussion followed about making the upgrade all at once versus making the upgrade over time.

***Maureen Kozlark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:53pm. Barbara Manners seconded. Motion carried 5-0.***