



Town of Ridgefield
Board of Selectpersons Meeting Minutes
UNAPPROVED

January 30, 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. Highway Department Budget

David Buccitti, Superintendent of the Highway Department, and Rich Morrell, Foreman, were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Personnel, specifically adding an Assistant Foreman position and backfilling a Driver-Laborer role, Mr. Buccitti's upcoming retirement and possibly filling that vacancy with a Construction/Project Manager or Civil Engineer, a modest increase in maintenance costs, diesel fuel costs, salt, and crack seal for roads.
- Mr. Buccitti shared their major capital asks (\$925,000) for the Highway Department:
 - o Replacing a Mac truck with a new Freightliner. Mr. Metzker shared Freightliner presented better value, service, training, and warranty, and would arrive in the summer. Expected to last 18+ years.
 - o Replacing Vactor, shared cost with WPCA. Current Vactor used daily to clean catch basins, WPCA uses to remediate sewer line clogs as needed. Mr. Buccitti stated this machine is critical for managing the municipal stormwater system. Maureen Kozlark suggested a further cost-sharing conversation with the WPCA and proposed a 75%-25% or 80%-20% split, with Highway covering the majority.
 - o Replacing existing boom-mower (\$80,000) with a heavy-duty rotary mower with fewer consumable parts, capable of also mowing brush.

2. Fire Department Budget

Jerry Myers, Fire Chief, and Michael Grasso, Assistant Fire Chief, were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- A reduction in the vehicle maintenance budget, due to 2 new fire trucks arriving this summer and needing less maintenance, year-to-date labor costs, gasoline, and the training, workflow, and schedule of dispatch personnel.
- Mr. Myers shared the Fire Department's major capital asks:
 - o New tri-band radios to communicate on mutual aid calls, with purchase phased over 3 years, starting with 1 for each vehicle on shift.

- Cancer prevention equipment. Mr. Grasso explained certified gear without PFAs isn't available, so the FD is making efforts to wear the gear less to reduce exposure. These jackets would be worn for all events other than structure or car fires, due to the chemicals/synthetic materials being emitted.
- Replacing old ambulance (\$400,000). Mr. Myers explained the lead-time is 3-years, which is when the Town would need a new ambulance. Rudy Marconi asked about purchasing a new chassis and reusing the box, Mr. Myers indicated he would be open to that solution, and it would offer a modest cost-saving.

3. Purchasing Department Budget

Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing, was in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- An increase in basic testing of catch basins, required by MS4, a modest increase in solid waste removal, line items removed for further consideration and/or grant applications (i.e. school roofs, radio tower generators), solar roof parking canopy at the High School.
- Rudy Marconi, Chris Murray, and Sean Connelly asked Mr. Muller his perspective on hiring a town engineer vs. engaging with contractors, and whether he had sufficient support for his role. Mr. Muller confirmed he felt sufficiently supported and could come back to the Board of Selectpersons with his perspective on hiring a town engineer.
- Mr. Muller shared the Purchasing Department's major capital asks:
 - Stormwater project (\$75,000) to remediate flooding issues and remain compliant with MS4's requirement to disconnect 2% of the Town's impervious surfaces. A project is currently in design at Farmingville School.
 - Door replacement program (\$60,000) to replace doors in municipal and school buildings, addressing security and safety concerns.
 - ADA-compliant playground upgrades (\$225,000) at Scotland Elementary School.
 - Mountain Road Bridge (\$225,000), the bridge is rated as poor. The total project cost is \$725,000, and the Town received a reimbursable \$500,000 grant.
 - Town safety audit (\$80,000). The town was awarded a demonstration grant through Safe Streets for All to evaluate the town, which would allow the Town to apply for implementation grants (i.e. for rapid flashing beacons). The total project cost is \$400,000, and the Town received a \$320,000 grant.

4. General Budget Discussion

No further discussion.

5. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote

There was no vote.

Sean Connelly motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:32pm. Maureen Kozlark seconded. Motion carried 5-0.