



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

**February 26, 2024 at 7:00pm**

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

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

**Absent:** Sean Connelly (present via text at the beginning of the meeting)

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

**1. ECDC Budget Discussion**

Glori Norwitt, Chair, Economic & Community Development Commission, and Commissioners Sean Dowd, Mark Riser, and Kay Gelfman, were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Rudy Marconi asked about Ridgefield's score (55) in Main Street Management Assessment from Connecticut Main Street Center. Ms. Norwitt confirmed the score was based on the overall town, goals, commercial inventory, and existing business mix.
- Ms. Norwitt discussed hiring a consultant to support the ECDC, stating a full-time role was included in their budget request, but 10-20 hours per week would be beneficial.
- Sean Connelly asked about the person ECDC would be seeking. Ms. Norwitt shared this role would involve administrative tasks: making phone calls, maintaining inventories, collecting demographic data, and speaking with businesses. Mr. Riser added if it was a part-time role, it would involve collecting information and ECDC leveraging the data, but if it's full-time, it would be a business development role involving data collection, producing reports and marketing materials, and meeting with businesses.
- Mr. Marconi asked about anticipated returns on a business development role. Ms. Norwitt shared the other towns they've talked to (i.e. Norwalk, New Milford, Bethel) have indicated their business development departments have seen great returns.
- Maureen Kozlark voiced appreciation for ECDC's proposal and applauded their tenacity, and expressed concerns with adding personnel to the budget. Ms. Norwitt stated their proposal would benefit the town monetarily, through marketing existing businesses and bringing in new businesses and creating a cohesive marketing plan for the Town.
- Barbara Manners shared business development personnel costs seem to pay off long-term, and asked whether Ridgefield High School students could be a resource. Mr. Dowd shared ECDC is working directly with the RHS Business Department, created a project for their spring symposium, and will have a senior intern. Ms. Manners asked about ECDC having their own full-time intern. Mr. Dowd shared they had concerns about office space. Mr. Marconi shared there could be space in Town Hall.

## **2. Police Department Budget**

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

- Purchase of new tri-band radios (\$512,000) in one year instead of over time to ensure all officers have the same capabilities. All radios are individually assigned to each officer.
- Chief Kreitz shared copies of an email with the BoS, quoting the turn-in value for the existing radios at \$250 each, representing approximately \$9,000 in savings toward the cost of new radios.
- Rudy Marconi asked about the life expectancy of radios. Chief Kreitz confirmed 10 years, and shared the RPD's existing radios are no longer supported.
- Mr. Marconi asked about approving \$256,000 for this year, and the RPD waiting to make their purchase until July 2025. Chief Kreitz expressed concerns about radios breaking down and being unable to repair. Maureen Kozlark asked what percentage of the radios are of concern. Chief Kreitz confirmed 100%, all the radios are the same age, unsupported, and RPD has only one (1) spare.
- Mr. Marconi asked about economies of scale. Chief Kreitz shared if the purchase is over \$1M, typically a 10% discount is offered and offered to call Motorola/NorcomCT to ask.
- Mr. Marconi, Chris Murray and Sean Connelly all voiced support for making the purchase in the manner that presents the best value to taxpayers.

## **3. Possible Capital/Operating Budget Vote**

There was no vote.

The Board of Selectpersons briefly discussed:

- WPCA, the Vactor, and their contributions toward maintenance costs.
- More targeted, cost-effective CHIRP fundraising efforts leveraging handwritten letters.
- Ridership at Branchville Train Station and decreased monthly parking permit sales.
- Kevin Redmond, Director, Finance, walked through: mill rate (3.1% or 4.1%) with or without using fund balance; and reducing expenditure budget by approximately \$150,000, could be found in the roads line item of the Highway Department budget.

***Maureen Kozlark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:19pm. Sean Connelly seconded. Motion carried 4-0.***