



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

**February 28, 2024 at 7:00pm**

Please note – these minutes are not verbatim.

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

**Absent:** Barbara Manners

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

**1. Mamasasco Lake Improvement Fund (MLIF) & Town Engineer**

Barbara Hartman, Vice President of MLIF, Rosemary Sposito, Treasurer of MLIF, Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing & Facilities, and Kevin Redmond, Director of Finance were in attendance.

Topics discussed included:

- Ms. Hartman confirmed MLIF's budget request (\$185,750) is sufficient for final design work, permitting and construction of the dam, with a \$70,000 contingency fund. MLIF has also applied for a total of \$100,000 in grants from the Ridgefield Thrift Shop, Wadsworth Lewis Fund, and Ann S. Richardson Fund.
- Sean Connelly asked about using town fill. Ms. Hartman confirmed savings would be approximately \$12,000 if the fill meets the engineering requirements.
- Mr. Marconi asked about other major expenses in the next 5-10 years. Ms. Hartman confirmed only routine maintenance for weeds and algae and no planned spillway work. MLIF applied for a grant (\$1,000) for a new tarp to keep the spillway from leaking.
- Ms. Hartman shared MLIF made their request in this year's budget cycle due to breach concerns and potential impacts on Route 116, Ridgebury Road, and Tiger Hollow.
- Mr. Marconi asked when the dam was built. Ms. Hartman confirmed 1700s, and it has had some work done since then, but essentially is the original dam.
- Maureen Kozlark asked about the project timeline. Ms. Hartman indicated maybe fall 2024, but most likely spring 2025, as permitting takes 6-9 months.
- Chris Murray, Mr. Connelly, and Ms. Kozlark voiced support for this project being included in this budget cycle with or without receiving grant funds.

**2. Parks & Recreation – Pickleball Court**

Dennis DiPinto, Director of Parks & Recreation, David Shofi, Parks & Recreation Commissioner, and Jacob Muller, Director of Purchasing & Facilities were in attendance. Topics discussed included:

- Mr. DiPinto shared the original design for the pickleball courts included post-tension concrete, but a blacktop surface would serve well for 10-12 years, saving \$158,000.

Maureen Kozlark asked about blacktop susceptibility to cracking. Mr. DiPinto confirmed there would be limited play December-March to minimize cracking from tension on terminal posts, but blacktop should perform as well as concrete if prepared correctly.

- Rudy Marconi asked about sound attenuation. Mr. DiPinto confirmed that would remain in the project budget.
- Mr. DiPinto shared the Parks & Recreation Commission met with Planning & Zoning for an informal discussion about applications and requirements, and they had some questions and concerns about the proposed drainage system. Mr. DiPinto will reengage with CCA about drainage possibilities to maintain more existing trees. Mr. Muller shared maybe using tree wells to save larger trees and a rain guard at the base of the slope.
- Ms. Kozlark asked about the parking lot. Mr. Marconi confirmed it's currently gravel and could add it into the paving schedule in the future.
- Chris Murray asked about conducting a traffic analysis. Mr. DiPinto confirmed they would. Mr. Shofi shared they would also study the impact on the dog park.
- Mr. Murray asked about inviting the Town to hear about the project. Mr. DiPinto confirmed they welcome public input, and shared a sound engineer is modeling sound attenuation impact on the closest neighbors to the proposed site.
- Mr. Murray asked about lighting. Mr. DiPinto confirmed lighting is not a priority, though it makes sense to lay conduit in the ground to have the option in the future.

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

Sean Connelly asked about the Economic & Community Development Commission (ECDC) budget. The BoS discussed leveraging existing Town personnel (i.e. Town Administrative Office Manager (AOM) or Information Desk staff) to assist with ECDC's administrative work and using ECDC's budget increase to hire a consultant or specialist from Main Street.

Kevin Redmond shared the proposed budget increase for the Town (3.5%), roads (0.46%), and combined Town and roads (2.89%). Maureen Kozlark and Mr. Connelly voiced support for the proposed 2.89% increase.

The BoS discussed some of the largest increases in the Town budget: central administration (full-time AOM), utilities, payroll services, and IT. Rudy Marconi shared he reduced the health insurance budget by \$50,000.

***Sean Connelly motioned to approve the Board of Selectperson's operating budget for fiscal year 2025 in the amount of \$43,309,290. Maureen Kozlark seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***

***Maureen Kozlark motioned to approve the roads and drainage ADA infrastructure in the amount of \$2,669,250. Chris Murray seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***

***Chris Murray moved to approve the non-binding recommendation to the Board of Finance for the Board of Education operating expenses in the amount of \$115,041,000. Sean Connelly seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***

***Sean Connelly motioned to approve the debt service for fiscal year 2025 in the amount of \$7,288,587. Maureen Kozlark seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***

***Maureen Kozlark motioned to approve the Board of Selectpersons and Board of Education capital budget for fiscal year 2025 in the amount of \$8,388,383, to be offset by potential grants totaling \$1,470,000, resulting in a net capital budget of \$6,918,383. Chris Murray seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***

***Sean Connelly motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:47pm. Maureen Kozlark seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.***