

BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING - MARCH 17, 2010
(Immediately following Special Town Meeting)

TOWN HALL/LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:30 P.M.

REVISED/APPROVED MINUTES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

In attendance: R. Marconi, A. Bodner, B. Manners, D. Masters, J. Plock

Agenda

1. Insurance Brokers Interviews: Lockton Inc., CBC Kane
2. Ridgefield Arts Council Interviews: Andrew Levine
3. Pension Commission Interview: Kevin Walsh
4. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview: Colleen Keating (student member)
5. RACE Activity Update: John Papa
6. Traffic Control Ordinance
7. Approval of Tax Refunds
8. Selectman's Report
9. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 1/27/10, 2/3/10, 3/3/10
10. Possible Executive Session: Children's Corner Lease

R. Marconi said "Happy St. Patrick's Day" and called the BOS Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., immediately following the Special Town Meeting, which was held to consider and act on the proposed revisions to the Code of the Town of Ridgefield, CT. (Minutes of the Special Town Meeting under separate cover.)

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to add the following items to the evening's agenda: Bio-Terrorism Grant Resolution for the Board of Health, and an addition to Agenda #10, Executive Session – Approval of Heart Hypertension Settlement, with a possible vote following. Motion passed 5-0.

1. Insurance Brokers Interviews: Lockton Inc., CBC Kane

The Insurance and Risk Management Committee reviewed the proposals for the health insurance and benefits broker for the Town of Ridgefield and they support the selection of either CBC Kane or Lockton. Representatives from each company were invited to be present this evening to discuss their company's proposal. All present were Laurie Scholl, Director of Human Resources, and Bill Jaeger, Chairman of the Insurance and Risk Management Committee, but speaking as a resident and not representing the Insurance & Risk Management Committee..

Lockton, Inc. – Aren Henderson and Debra Testa

Aren Henderson and Debra Testa came forward to give a brief overview of their company, Lockton, Inc., and how they have worked with Ridgefield in the past. They are the largest privately-held insurance brokerage firm in the U.S. Their firm started in 1956, with their headquarters in Kansas City. Their consultants are all experience underwriters. Being national in scope, there is a lot of variety of experience in their staff, which also include a medical director,

compliance attorneys, and IT expertise. Because of their size nationally, they have a lot of market leverage with the major carriers. Debra indicated how she works with the public sector business, and they have a lot of business throughout Connecticut.

Andy Bodner asked her to address employee benefits and the costs as the BOS is concerned about expenditures. She responded that all their underwriters have a funding background. What would be the best funding arrangement for Ridgefield? She commented on how HSA's in other locations did not see the desired change in human behavior. The employee needs to be more prudent about their medical expenses and have to be educated accordingly. There has to be the right wording in the bargaining agreement. Their approach is to spread out the communication. Lockton recognizes the constraints in a publicly-bargained agreement, and they want to structure the benefits program correctly. A municipality needs to set realistic expectations. Their experience has shown a maximum of approximately 20% participation in HSA's in the municipal block. Communication is the key to make employees move to the HSA program. A. Bodner indicated that the goal is for the consumer to understand the costs and then be prudent to save dollars. Debra responded that preventive care is all covered. 50% level of the deductible is available when there are real changes in participation numbers. Lockton suggests that non-union employees go into HSA plan offerings first. This helps for others to understand the program before going into negotiations with union employees. Glastonbury, CT is a similar size town to Ridgefield. She is able to show how Glastonbury has been involved with the HSA offering. Lockton provides a dedicated employee communication person for their client towns. A. Bodner asked if conversion to HSA works in every circumstance? Debra responded no – there are exceptions to every plan.

CBC Kane – Rob Fitzpatrick and Sonia Kaminsky

Rob Fitzpatrick and Sonia Kaminsky came forward to discuss what their firm can do for Ridgefield. Rob has negotiated recently a contract with Ridgefield's BOE that the Board of Education is very happy with. Rob indicated that he deals with municipality markets for CBC Kane. He handles the largest municipal accounts in Connecticut. Ridgefield's BOE agreement provided for a set of ten meetings to educate the employees. They collected data looking at the premium out-of-pocket charges for every family. All but five employees were better off thru the HSA program. J. Plock asked what is CBC Kane's expectation of participation in the HSA plan for the BOE employees? – the answer is 30%. Rob indicated that those around Connecticut who have had problems are because of the lack of appropriate education. CBC Kane administers the education program. They currently represent 15 municipalities in Connecticut in addition to Ridgefield's BOE. The firm has an array of Human Resources specialists to work with client towns.

Andy Bodner asked how can Ridgefield save thru HSA? Why is it good for the individual to pay for participation in an HSA plan rather than participate in their spouse's plan?

Resident Andrew Levine commented on how it is apparent that education is the key to make things work. They need someone who can simplify the complexity of the insurance plan. What makes for a good education? That is an art.

J. Plock commented on how CBC Kane seems to be mainly involved with public school systems from the list of clients presented. There is a big difference between the employees of the BOE and the municipality employees. She is not sure that one firm should have the "total package".

B. Manners stated how both firms made very good presentations. She felt that it was easier to understand Lockton than Kane. She feels we should stay with whom we have worked with in the past. She is more comfortable staying with Lockton at this time.

D. Masters stated how Ridgefield has two different types of needs. Lockton educated us about the pitfalls in order to maneuver if we are going to undertake participation in an HSA offering.

Laurie Scholl indicated that Lockton has done special projects for Ridgefield in the past, but they are not our insurance brokers. B. Manners indicated that she had not realized this, but she is still comfortable selecting Lockton as Ridgefield's municipal broker.

Bill Jaeger stated that speaking as himself and not as the Chairman of the Insurance and Risk Management Committee, he personally prefers CBC Kane. He understands their math. Lockton in his estimation was "too vague".

J. Plock, D. Masters and B. Manners indicated how they all feel comfortable selecting Lockton. They feel that Lockton is the most familiar with the municipal side and because they are a large national firm, they have a huge depth of resources. A. Bodner indicated that he feels we would be well served by either one. He liked how CBC Kane showed how an HSA offering would save us dollars in the following ways.

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to select Lockton Inc. as the Insurance and Benefits Broker for coverage of the municipal employees of the Town of Ridgefield. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Ridgefield Arts Council Interview: Andrew Levine

Andrew Levine came forward to express his interest in serving on the Ridgefield Arts Council. Mr. Levine attended the January meeting of the Arts Council and has lived in Ridgefield with his family for six years. His background is in the arts and business as a piano performer, musical director, teacher, and currently the Executive Producer/Director for a commercial theatrical company and co-founder of a non-profit theater company. His expertise is in the combination of business and the arts. B. Manners asked Mr. Levine what would be his goal as a member of the Arts Council? He responded that he would like to give back to the community and feels he can share his expertise with the Arts Council in the areas of marketing and a higher profile for the arts in Ridgefield. There is a rich cultural life available in Ridgefield with the Symphony, the Playhouse, etc. There needs to be more "excitement" about the arts in Ridgefield – just the website is not enough. B. Manners indicated that the Arts Council needs to be more proactive, especially in this time of limited funding.

D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to appoint Andrew Levine to fill a vacancy on the Ridgefield Arts Council for a four-year term. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Pension Commission Interview: Kevin Walsh & Michael Andrews

Kevin Walsh came forward to express his interest in serving on the Pension Commission. He grew up in Ridgefield and has 23 years of experience in the financial services industry. He recently completed a four-year term on Ridgefield's Board of Finance. The Board members all stated how they have known Mr. Walsh over the years and expressed their appreciation for his term on the Board of Finance and his continual service to the Town. He was an appointed member of the 300th Anniversary Committee of Ridgefield, served on the Ridgefield Community

Center's Board of Directors, and is a past President of the Rotary Club of Ridgefield. He also served as President of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Connecticut, Inc. from 1997 thru 2000, and continued on its Board of Directors until 2002.

Michael Andrews came forward to express his interest in serving on the Pension Commission. His wife grew up in Ridgefield, and they lived in Hong Kong and London before returning to Ridgefield with their three children. He works in NY for a Japanese asset management firm with responsibility for their U.S. mutual fund business. A. Bodner asked Mr. Andrews about his view of the investment philosophy of the Pension Commission. He responded that he has not attended any of their meetings, but has read the minutes. He feels the Ridgefield's pension planning is well-run and well-funded. They have rebounded quite well from the recent extreme drop in the financial markets. They seem to have an appropriate mix of bonds, equities, etc. and the Commission seems to be a group of well-qualified individuals. He stated how the pension investments are so very important. If they are not managed correctly, then additional dollars from the town budget will have to be put into the pension plans. This would result in these dollars not being available for other expenditures.

Additional applicants for the Pension Commission will be interviewed at the April 7th BOS Meeting.

4. Ridgefield Prevention Council Interview: Colleen Keating (student member)

Colleen Keating, a sophomore at Ridgefield High School, came forward to express her interest in serving on the Ridgefield Prevention Council as a voting member and not just as a volunteer. She states that she "loves the Council" and that they are doing good things. She just finished working on the Middle School Family University project last week. D. Masters asked Colleen if she experiences any "push back" from the other students for her involvement with the Ridgefield Prevention Council. Colleen commented on the importance of the youth-to-youth nationwide drug-free program.

J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to appoint Colleen Keating as a student voting member of the Ridgefield Prevention Council. Motion passed 5-0.

5. RACE Activity Update: John Papa

The following representatives from RACE came forward to present this organization's quarterly report to the BOS: Gretchen Bishop, President of RACE, Dwayne Escada, and John Papa. Their last update to the BOS was following the end of the 2009 school year. There are now additional residents involved in RACE and a new focus. Town agencies have been seeking them out. Solar panels have been installed at the Rec Center with an estimated savings of approximately \$3,600/year in energy costs. This was possible thru volunteer efforts, grants and funding from the CT Clean Energy Fund. A thank you is due to Jay Whelan for all his efforts on behalf of this project.

With last year's BOS assistance, RACE became members of: ICLEI (Cities for Climate Protection Campaign), U.S. Conference of Mayors/Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, Clean Cities program, and most recently the Governor's Climate Change Summit last weekend. They have become a member of the Chamber of Commerce working with them on environmentally and energy efficient initiatives, and major efforts and strategies have been implemented and continue to grow for reducing, reusing, and recycling of all resources.

Dwayne Escada is responsible for RACE's energy committee and he distributed a chart indicating some progress in the reduction of Ridgefield's electrical usage. RACE continues to be involved on all clean energy programs within the community and assisting the channels already in place. PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) is a program that needs state legislative law to allow municipalities to finance clean energy systems or energy efficiency retrofits, as an option for property owners, which is paid back thru property tax bills. This program is currently adopted in 16 states, and is typically funded by municipal bonds. It allows the property owner to plan long-term. When the property is sold the renewable energy system or energy efficiency improvement goes along with any tax liability. A. Bodner asked about any suggestions for the Recycling Center? Recycling is now part of the Town's budget. They are coming up with a Mainstreet Recycling Program. The BOS thanked the RACE representatives for the update on their activities.

6. Traffic Control Ordinance

Laurie Scholl, Director of Human Resources, Police Chief John Roche, and Town Counsel David Grogins came forward to discuss the latest version of the proposed Traffic Control Ordinance. D. Grogins reviewed the most recent changes in the wording of the ordinance. D. Masters and A. Bodner expressed their support for earlier versions of the ordinance with "simpler" language. They also reviewed the proposed Schedule A listing the relevant State roads and Town roads and made changes in the lists. Chief Roche stated how he can currently call in a flag person if the road construction creates an unsafe traffic situation. With the ordinance, he will be able to even shut down any situation that is not safe. This "raises the bar" of his authority. This ordinance will give the Police Chief "more teeth" to the authority he already has.

John Katz, Ridgebury Rd., asked why Town construction sites should be exempt from this ordinance? Mr. Katz feels that it is not fair to put this expense burden on the residents. R. Marconi responded that the Town currently have flag people on their staff. The request for this ordinance was the result of recent police labor negotiations. D. Grogins will rework the wording of the ordinance and furnish the BOS with new copies.

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to hold a Public Hearing and a Town Meeting on April 28, 2010, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT, for approval of the proposed amended Traffic Control Ordinance and attached Schedule A, also amended. Motion passed 5-0.

7. Approval of Tax Refunds

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve the March 11, 2010 memo from Jane Bernedsen-Hill, Tax Collector, listing tax refunds totaling \$10,307.39. Motion passed 5-0.

8. Bio-Terrorism Grant Resolution

A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the proposed Bio-Terrorism Grant Resolution for the Ridgefield Board of Health. Motion passed 5-0.

9. Selectman's Report

- a. The recent weekend rain storm caused one small house fire which was started outside from the electrical box, and one tree down on Hayes Lane. Ridgefield escaped the brunt of the storm which was along the Merritt Parkway and south affecting the towns along the Long

Island Sound. The response time from NE Utilities in these towns was very slow in their reluctance to bring in crews for overtime. Governor Rell is investigating these complaints.

- b. Kevin Redmond, Director of Finance, indicated that there will be a Board of Finance Public Hearing on the proposed 2010-2011 budget on Monday evening, March 29, at 7:30 p.m. Deborah Low, representing the BOE, and R. Marconi, representing the BOS and the municipal portion of the proposed budget, will give presentations followed by comments from the public. The BOF will hear from the Fire Department and Highway Dept. on March 30, Parks & Rec on March 31, and the Town Engineer on April 1st. The BOF is responsible for capital and overall budget financing, but not the details of each department's operating budget. The BOF should be speaking directly to the BOS and not to the individual departments. R. Marconi will draft a letter to the BOF and will send a copy to the BOS members for their review.

10. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 1/27/10, 2/3/10, 3/3/10

J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the January 27, 2010 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

Andy Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the February 3, 2010 Public Hearing and Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 4-0-1. B. Manners abstained as she was not present at the February 3rd meeting.

J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the March 3, 2010 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

11. Executive Session: Possibly Children's Corner Lease and Approval of Heart Hypertension Settlement

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to recess the BOS Meeting at 10:50 p.m. and go into Executive Session with Laurie Scholl, Director of Human Resources, invited to participate relative to the possible approval of the Heart Hypertension Settlement. Motion passed 5-0.

R. Marconi indicated that he has not received the latest version of the proposed lease from the Children's Corner attorney – thus, nothing definitive to review at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson