

MINUTES – SPECIAL TOWN MEETING – OCTOBER 6, 2010-10-08

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

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

Absent: D. Master, J. Plock

*Notice is hereby given that a **Special Town Meeting** will be held on October 6, 2010, 7:30 P.M., Town Hall/Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to:*

- 1) *act on the proposed lease of 2.146 acres of land from the State of Connecticut (the former Walpole property) to the Town of Ridgefield for an Athletic Field;*
- 2) *act on the proposed one (1)-year lease between The Town of Ridgefield and Goodwill Industries International, Inc., for the premises located at Old Quarry Road, Ridgefield, CT as shown on map attached to the lease with designation of "Parcel A – approximate area 1.430 sq. feet";*
- 3) *act on comments relative to the Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue, Inc. (ROAR) proposed building/parking lot expansion at the intersection of South Street and South Street By-Pass, Ridgefield, CT.*

Maps and related documents for the proposed lease of State Land, the proposed lease between the Town of Ridgefield and Goodwill Industries International and the proposed ROAR building/parking lot expansion are available for public inspection in the office of the First Selectman and the Town Clerk.

R. Marconi called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He then read the call for the Special Town Meeting.

John Katz moved and Andy Bodner seconded a motion to appoint John Frey as Moderator of the Special Town Meeting. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Ed Tyrrell moved and Andy Bodner seconded a motion to appoint Rudy Marconi as the Recording Secretary of the Special Town Meeting. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Moderator John Frey read the request for Item #1: act on the proposed lease of 2.146 acres of land from the State of Connecticut (the former Walpole property) to the Town of Ridgefield for an Athletic Field, and opened the meeting for comments from the public.

There were no comments other than a thank you to John Frey for his assistance in making this happen.

Ed Tyrrell moved and John Katz seconded a motion to approve the proposed lease of 2.146 acres of land from the State of Connecticut (the former Walpole property) to the Town of Ridgefield for an Athletic Field. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

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Moderator John Frey read the request for Item #2: act on the proposed one (1)-year lease between the Town of Ridgefield and Goodwill Industries International, Inc. for the premises located at Old Quarry Road, Ridgefield, CT as shown on map attached to the lease with designation of "Parcel A- approximate area 1,430 sq. feet", and opened the meeting for comments from the public.

John Katz, Ridgebury Rd., inquired as to the response to his previous question at the Public Hearing whether Goodwill Industries is totally a 501C3 company. If so, he is not comfortable with charging a rental fee. R. Marconi indicated that he could not find out the answer to this question. They are a 501C3 organization but he does not know if there are any parts of the company that do not have this tax classification. He reported on his meeting with the President and Finance Director of Goodwill Industries. They have been very philanthropic to the community and they do not have a problem with the \$750/month agreed-upon donation for maintenance of the fountain.

Ed Tyrrell, Pond Rd., stated that he would be voting against this proposed lease because there is no correlation between Goodwill Industries and maintenance of the fountain, an "object of art". Mr. Tyrrell contacted Goodwill and the COO of Goodwill returned his inquiry and stated that he was "not enthusiastic" about the lease. J. Katz had made a motion to approve the proposed lease and it was seconded, but then Mr. Katz withdrew his motion to await further info as to the wishes of Goodwill Industries. Mr. Bob Alicea withdrew his second.

Dave Goldenberg, Seth Low Mountain Rd., commented on Goodwill's mission to help those in need. They provide training and housing for the disabled, grants for water and electricity bills, help with employment. They give 100% back to the community. We should not be charging them. This is an "embarrassment"!

Dom D'Addario inquired as to why the one year term for the lease. R. Marconi replied that this was Goodwill's request. The BOS is very comfortable with the terms of this lease. All non-profits pay rent in Ridgefield. Goodwill is the only non-profit paying no rent at all. The terms of the lease are for \$1/year rent and the \$750/month is a donation.

A resident of Nod Rd. asked about the utilities available at the trailer site. The Town also does the plowing and road repairs.

Bruce Yuen, Blackman Rd. asked what is the rent charged to other non-profits in Ridgefield? The Playhouse pays about \$1200/month.

B. Manners commented on how the Town needs revenue, and the funds for the fountain maintenance have to come from somewhere. The fountain is a symbol of Ridgefield. If there is no income for the fountain, then the monies will have to come out of the Community Grant budget dollars. The Town will have to reduce donations to other philanthropic organizations to pay for the fountain. Goodwill Industries has a store in NYC and they pay rent there. B. Manners made a motion to approve the proposed lease and it was seconded by Bruce Yuen. **The motion did not pass. Vote: 7 Yes, 7 No.**

Mr. Katz stated that he would like to see further investigation and that it be brought back at a later time.

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Moderator John Frey read the request for Item #3 to: act on comments relative to the Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue, Inc. (ROAR) proposed building/parking lot expansion at the intersection of South Street and South Street By-Pass, Ridgefield, CT.

John Katz, Ridgebury Rd., stated how ROAR pays for everything out of private funds – the plowing, electricity, etc. The \$1/year lease is for the land only.

Ed Tyrrell moved and Dom D'Addario seconded a motion to act on comments relative to the Ridgefield Operation for Animal Rescue, Inc. (ROAR) proposed building/parking lot expansion at the intersection of South Street and South Street By-Pass, Ridgefield, CT. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Special Town Meeting was closed at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rudy Marconi, Recording Secretary