

BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING – JANUARY 4, 2006

TOWN HALL/LOWER LEVEL 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

Fire Commission Meeting Agenda

- 1. Chief Lou Yarrish Exit Interview (Executive Session)**
- 2. John Sullivan Retirement Extension Request**

A **Public Hearing** will be held on January 4, 2006, 7:30 P.M., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to discuss proposed leases between the Town of Ridgefield and LifeCare Design, Inc; and the Town of Ridgefield and the Visiting Nurse Association.

Board of Selectmen Meeting (Immediately following the Public Hearing)

1. BEI Telephone Lease
2. Georgetown Historic Film Presentation
3. Ridgefield Housing Authority Tenant Representative Interview – Peter Casagrande
4. Golf Committee – Concession Lease and Options
5. Insurance & Risk Management Committee Draft Charge
6. Ridgebury Mountain Name Change to Seth Low Mountain
7. Appointment of Subregistrars of Vital Statistics
8. Historic Documents Presentation Grant
9. Credit Leasing Motor Vehicle Tax Refunds
10. Town of Ridgefield Seal in Color
11. Approval of Meeting Minutes – 11/30/05, 12/14/05
12. Selectman's Report

R. Marconi called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30 p.m. following the Executive Session which began at 6:30 p.m.

The first proposed lease discussed was between LifeCare Design, Inc. and the Town of Ridgefield for 1,474 sq. feet of space, consisting of Rooms 226, 228 and 229, on the second floor of the Richard E. Venus building. The term of this lease shall be for a period of five (5) years beginning on February 1, 2006. A Town Meeting will be held on January 18, 2006, Town Hall Large Conference Room, at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of approval of this lease. The Public Hearing was open for comments from the public; there were none. R. Marconi closed the Public Hearing on this issue. The Town Meeting for the purpose of approval of this lease is scheduled for January 18 at 7:30 p.m./ Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room.

The second proposed lease discussed was between The Visiting Nurse Association of Ridgefield, Inc., and the Town of Ridgefield for 13,750 sq. feet of space on the first and second floors of the Richard E.

Venus Building for the period from October 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004, and from January 1, 2005 until September 30, 2013, 6,057 sq. feet of space on the first floor and 824 sq. feet of space on the second floor of the Richard E. Venus Building.. The term of this lease shall be for a period of ten (10) years beginning on October 1, 2004. A Town Meeting will be held on January 18, 2006, Town Hall Large Conference Room at 7:30 p.m. for the purpose of approval of this lease.

Mr. Marconi reviewed the use of the Richard E. Venus Building by the Visiting Nurse Association and the reduction in leased space. A. Bodner inquired as to the amount of rent being received from the space that has been vacated by the Visiting Nurse Association and rented to other renters. R. Marconi indicated that three areas have been re-rented now and at a higher rate than was being charged to the VNA, a non-profit organization. He did not have the exact numbers with him at the meeting.

The Public Hearing was open for comments from the public; there were none. R. Marconi closed the Public Hearing at 7:45 p.m.

Board of Selectmen Meeting

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectmen Meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

1. BEI Telephone Lease – Jay Wahlberg, Town Controller, came forward to discuss BOS approval for the proposed new telephone system. Mr. Wahlberg is requesting approval to accept Business Electronics, Inc.’s proposal to install a new digital telephone and voice mail system.

Andy Bodner asked for the results of bids by other vendors for the purchase and installation of a new telephone system. J. Wahlberg replied that he had received two additional bids – Cohere, whose phone system is designed primarily for companies doing mostly long distance calling, and their equipment plugs into a computer, which does not suit Ridgefield’s needs; and SCI, whose bid was \$2,000 less than BEI’s bid. Ridgefield’s Board of Education currently uses BEI. BEI agreed to the suggested changes in the lease wording as requested at a previous BOS meeting and additional changes as requested by the Board of Finance. J. Wahlberg feels he has done due diligence in selecting BEI. He did site visits and worked with BEI for approximately a year defining Ridgefield’s needs. The phone system should be a stand-alone system and not part of the data processing system for the town.

Tom Weeks, Olmstead Lane, represents SCI, and was asked to come forward to discuss his proposal. He is suggesting a different approach. The BEI system does not include the Recreation Center and the Ridgebury Fire Department. BEI felt the Rec Center system is only three years old and is a digital system. Mr. Weeks suggested moving the Recreation Center phone system to the Golf Course and adding both the Ridgebury Fire Department and the Rec Center to the Town’s overall new system. He pointed out that the equipment both he and BEI would use is the same – manufactured by Intertel. BEI provides a warranty of one year parts and labor. SCI would provide a two-year warranty on all parts and routers. He indicated that they are not comparing “apples to apples”. His proposal is different. He would provide centralized voicemail. His brand new phone system would tie in with Parks & Rec. J. Wahlberg replied that BEI excluded canine, Ridgebury Fire Department, and the Golf Course because of the distance from the town center. SCI’s bid costs out at \$134,785. T. Weeks believes that if the comparisons were “apples to apples”, SCI would come out approximately \$10,000 less. They are offering a one-time charge for the hardware, no ongoing charges, and they will use the same equipment from the same manufacturer as BEI. Each location could stand on their own and network.

D. Masters inquired as to a possible advantage of joining with the school system's BEI system. Mr. Weeks did not feel that this would result in a savings. They can still network together because the basic equipment will be the same. He will provide on-going training and on-going service. B. Manners asked for references. Mr. Weeks will be glad to provide such.

Andy Bodner asked if it is necessary to vote this evening on the BEI proposal or can the BOS wait and compare more?

B. Manners inquired as to the process for settling on the BEI bid? Did we not advertise for bids? The answer is no. The selection of BEI was based on the State preferred vendor list and the history of BEI with the school system. The goal was to switch from an analog to a digital system. B. Manners indicated that she liked the idea of being able to tie in the Ridgebury Fire Department to the new system.

J. Plock pointed out that the BOS voted on November 30th to "approve as amended the telephone lease with Business Electronics, Inc. (BEI), contingent upon acceptance by BEI of the changes in the lease wording, and to hold a Town Meeting on December 14, 2005, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room for public approval of this lease. The motion passed 5-0. BEI has agreed to the changes in the lease wording as requested.

When questioned about the procedure to follow with regard to this vote on November 30, 2005, David Grogins, Town Counsel, replied that under Robert's Rules of Order, which the Ridgefield BOS meeting follows, a vote that was previously taken can be reconsidered. The question is if anyone relied to their detriment based on the decision. The agreement has not been signed. R. Marconi pointed out that BEI had asked for a letter of intent which he did provide. The letter stated that the Town of Ridgefield planned to move ahead with the BEI lease, but this was contingent upon BOS approval on January 4th. D. Grogins stated that he does not feel that any real agreement between the Town of Ridgefield and BEI exists. He believes the BOS could vote to reconsider their previous vote.

Andy Bodner indicated that he would like to see a more detailed comparison between SCI and BEI, but he will defer if R. Marconi feels a commitment to BEI has been made.

It was agreed to put off the final selection of a company to provide the new phone system until further comparisons are available. The manufacturer is the same, but the procedure is different and the engineering is different. J. Wahlberg indicated that he feels very comfortable with BEI. He feels he has done his due diligence. He will pursue the comparisons between the two proposals as requested. Because of vacation plans, he will report back to the Board of Selectmen the first week in February.

2. Georgetown Historic Film Presentation – Jan August and Lynn Heisen came forward to present their Georgetown History Project – "A Georgetown Story", a 30-minute documentary film on the history of Georgetown. Ms. Heisen is the past President of the Reading Historical Society and previously helped to produce an historical film depicting Margaret Wickstead for Channel 79. They are seeking BOS support both financial and otherwise. They have secured \$500 from Redding and \$500 from Weston and are meeting with the Wilton BOS next week. Their budget is \$61,500, and have already raised approximately \$10,000. They feel there is a benefit in the research (the contacting of former residents to evoke and record memories), a project like this is a community effort which brings people together in a positive way, and the resulting film will be an

historic presentation available to future generations. This is an important time to be doing this project with the planned development for Georgetown and the Gilbert & Bennett facility.

B. Manners suggested that an application to Ridgefield's "Grant in Aid" program would be appropriate for this project. The Georgetown History Project Committee will submit a letter of request.

3. Ridgefield Housing Authority Tenant Representative Interview – Peter Casagrande

Mr. Casagrande came forward to introduce himself to the BOS and discuss his candidacy for the Ridgefield Housing Authority. R. Marconi read the letter received from Mr. Casagrande. He has been a resident of Ballard Green for the past five years. Mr. Casagrande feels he would be very effective in representing and advocating for the residents of Ballard Green. J. Plock inquired as to what is unique that Mr. Casagrande will be bringing to the Housing Authority. He replied that he can represent the Ballard Green tenants in an orderly fashion and bring tenant insight to the Authority. B. Manners inquired as to why Mr. Casagrande wants to do this. He replied that he is "community-minded". She asked if he feels that Ballard Green is currently well-represented? He replied no, he feels there are issues that have not been addressed; for example, snow plowing, caring for the walks. D. Masters indicated her appreciation of Mr. Casagrande's desire to serve. R. Marconi pointed out that additional candidates will be interviewed as well and the position is being advertised in the paper. J. Plock suggested seeking a recommendation from the Housing Authority.

4. Golf Committee – Concession Lease and Options – The following individuals came forward to discuss the food concession issue at the Golf Club: Frank Sergiovanni, Golf Club Director, and members of the Golf Committee – Al Fazi, Carol Ancona, Jay Saks, and Ed Tyrrell.

The food concession should open on April 1st when the Golf Club opens. To date, no one has come forward to express a definite interest in renting the space and running a food operation for the 2006 golf season. The Golf Committee is advertising again January 8th in many area papers with an attention-getting block ad. The thought is if no one comes forward, then perhaps the Town will have to take over the food concession. Plans for Town management are to be made in conjunction with the advertising so as to be prepared either way. The original purpose of the food concession is to serve the golfers. It would be much more attractive to a tenant if the restaurant could be open year around, but the zoning does not allow for that. Laurie Scholl, Director of Human Resources, suggested researching food service corporations to see if there is any interest. It is an 80-90 hour/week responsibility during the golf season plus the outlay of approximately \$25,000 to purchase the kitchen equipment. It was agreed that there are many barriers for finding such a renter; the Golf Committee is perhaps looking for an individual who doesn't exit. What is the incentive for such an individual? The question was raised as to liability for the Town if the Town manages the concession and sells alcohol. What are the Health Department rules? All these issues need to be considered. It was agreed that the Golf Committee will continue to keep the BOS informed as to the results of their advertisement and move ahead with possible plans for the Town to manage the food concession if that becomes a necessity.

5. Insurance & Risk Management Committee Draft Charge – The Risk Management and Insurance Committee has drafted a new charge. R. Marconi indicated that he will forward to the BOS copies of the former charge and put this item on the agenda for the January 18 BOS meeting.

6. Ridgebury Mountain Name Change to Seth Low Mountain – A letter has been received from the United States Board on Geographic Names informing the Town of Ridgefield that the U.S. Board on Geographic Names had approved the proposal to change officially the name of a summit in the Town of Ridgefield from Ridgebury Mountain to Seth Low Mountain. The decision was made in agreement with the findings and recommendations from the Town of Ridgefield and the Ridgefield Town Historical Society.
7. Appointment of Subregistrars of Vital Statistics –
In accordance with CGS 7-65, the Town Clerk can appoint subregistrars of vital statistics, with the approval of the selectmen. They are appointed for the purpose of issuing burial transit removal permits during the hours in which the Town Clerk’s office is closed. **J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to appoint Daniel P. Jowdy of the Kane Funeral Home as Subregistrar of Vital Statistics from January 2, 2006 until January 7, 2008, as requested by Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk. Motion passed 5-0.**
8. Historic Documents Preservation Grant - A letter has been received by Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk from Eunice DiBella, Public Records Administrator of the State of Connecticut, Connecticut State Library, informing Ridgefield that they have been awarded a Historic Documents Preservation Grant in the amount of \$7,000.00. This is a grant that Ms. Serfilippi was hoping to receive. The money has to be spent by June 30, 2006.
9. Credit Leasing Motor Vehicle Tax Refunds –
B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as requested by the Tax Collector’s Office, the credit leasing motor vehicle tax refunds. Motion passed 5-0.
10. Town of Ridgefield Seal in Color – A copy of the proposed Ridgefield Seal in color is available for consideration. Peter Hill thought the seal in color would look better on Town vehicles. The Town Clerk is the “keeper” of the seal. R. Marconi will research the cost of producing the seal in color versus black/white.
11. Approval of Meeting Minutes – 11/30/05, 12/14/05
J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the November 30, 2005 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.
B. Manners moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the December 14, 2005 Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.
12. First Selectman’s Report –
 - The minutes of the Mamasasco Fund indicated that they will be asking D. Masters if she is willing to be their liaison to the Board of Selectmen.
 - R. Marconi read a letter received from the Chamber of Commerce relative to establishment of a new Economic Development Commission. The Chamber would like to participate and be more active on such a Commission. Business development and retention is a high priority. They are also suggesting a downtown traffic and parking pattern study. The Chamber is suggesting Penny Hoffman, their CEO, as a member of the new to-be-formed

Economic Development Commission. It was agreed that the Chamber should select a representative to the Commission. R. Marconi will write the Chamber a letter stating such.

- R. Marconi distributed copies of a new brochure for the City of Ridgefield paid for by advertisers.
- R. Marconi is working on a STEEP grant with John Frey to provide dollars for street lights and sidewalks along the Route 35 corridor. They are also working on a grant for Ballard Green --\$75,000 needed for a proposed new entrance to the park as planned by the Friends of Ballard Park.
- R. Marconi has met with the two sisters who own the CVS shopping center relative to development of a parking area behind CVS. The parking jams at the Post Office are excessive. He will contact Chris Shays to see if support is available to improve parking at this location.

Andy Bodner inquired about the possibility of setting a goal agenda and have it be a “final agenda” prior to the meeting. Also, is it possible to have an agenda item for “New Business”? R. Marconi replied that there has not been a “New Business” agenda item in the past. He prefers that the public have notice of issues to be discussed at BOS meetings. If anyone has an item they wish to have on the agenda, please let Wendy or R. Marconi know. It was also agreed that the “final agenda” will be set on the Friday prior to a BOS meeting the following Wednesday evening.

J. Plock requested an update on the mold issue for the next BOS agenda.

J. Plock moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 9:30 p.m. and reconvene the Executive Session to discuss the Fire Chief replacement search with Laurie Scholl, Director of Human Resources, present. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson