

PUBLIC HEARING & BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING
FEBRUARY 3, 2010

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

Absent: J. Plock

Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on February 3, 2010, 7:30 p.m., in the Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to discuss and act on the following proposed revisions to the Code of the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut.

Agenda

1. Jesse Lee United Methodist Church Requested Tax Abatement
2. Golf Course Financials: Frank Sergiovanni
3. Golf Course Capital Budget (15 min)
4. Engineering Department Capital Budget (30 min)
5. Parks & Recreation Capital Budget (30 min)
6. Fire Department Capital Budget (30 min)
7. General Capital Budget Discussion
8. Capital Community College Agreement Resolution
9. Selectman's Report

Public Hearing

R. Marconi called the Public Hearing to order immediately following a Town Meeting at 7:35 p.m. (Town Meeting minutes under separate cover.) R. Marconi read the notice of the Public Hearing to discuss and act on the proposed revisions to the Code of the Town of Ridgefield. Ridgefield's Code needs to be brought up-to-date and made available on-line. General Code Publishers was hired to review the Code and look for any problems and/or discrepancies. One of the goals is to revise the Code into an easier more user-friendly format. David Grogins, Town Clerk and Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk, came forward to discuss some of the changes being made. This is a "housekeeping effort". The proposed revisions are in draft form. D. Grogins read a memo of purpose written by General Code Publishers detailing why the Town should consider revitalizing their Code.

- The Code needs to be in an easy-to-use format, divided into parts to accommodate different types of legislation and then organized into chapters, arranged alphabetically by subject matter.
- It must be easy to locate specific information within the Code. There will be a Table of Contents and an Index designed to be easy to use.
- The Code must be updated on a regular basis to maintain its integrity and reliability.
- There is now more need for municipalities to have their Codes available in an electronic format.

No new ordinances are being added to the Code at this time.

Police Officers Major Don McGran and Sgt. Amy Kertesz indicated that the Police Department has some concerns about several of the ordinances. The wording of these ordinances is such that the Police Department has not been able to enforce these ordinances for approximately the past seven years. The

Town would get into legal problems if these ordinances were enforced as written. R. Marconi suggested that the Police Department submit their requests in writing to be considered at a later date once the Code is reorganized. R. Marconi indicated that there are 13 ordinances that have been passed since the Code was written and these are not even in the Code book. B. Manners suggested that each department should review the Code relevant to their department and submit in writing their comments regarding their relevant section. D. Grogins indicated that this process was done about three years ago, but then the changes were not made. By State statute, the Code is supposed to be updated every two years. There is a specified process for making changes to the ordinances that is to be followed, and this is what should be done once the reorganization process is completed..

What are the costs for this reorganization of the Code? The Code has not been changed since 1974. We do not know the cost for putting the Code on-line; that is a by-product of this reorganization.

Andy Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to set a Town Meeting for February 17, 2010, 7:30 P.M., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT to act on the proposed revisions to the Code of the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut. Motion passed 4-0.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:55 p.m. with the Board of Selectmen Meeting following immediately.
Board of Selectmen Meeting

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve the request of Rudy Marconi to add three items to the BOS meeting agenda:

- 1. Vote on acceptance of the legal agreement between Mr. Provey and the Town of Ridgefield relative to the Sturges Park (Girl Scout) property.**
- 2. Funding of Ridgefield Responds to Haiti with funds remaining from Friends of Ridgefield Katrina assistance dollars.**
- 3. Executive Session following the evening's agenda items to discuss the Schlumberger property with the possibility of a vote**

Motion passed 4-0.

- 1) Legal Agreement Between the Town of Ridgefield and Mr. Provey
David Grogins, Town Counsel, came forward to discuss the agreement finally reached between Mr. Provey and the Town of Ridgefield relevant to a disputed boundary line to the Girl Scout property and in return an easement providing Mr. Provey access to his driveway. R. Marconi showed a map of the property under discussion. This settlement clarifies a lot of old issues and the deed has been researched which will now provide the Town a clear title. Mr. Provey is giving the Town a quit claim deed for all the land west of his boundary. The Town has agreed to not construct any ball fields on the property for the next twenty years. The Boy Scouts can now run an electric line up to their well. Both the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts use this property. All parties are happy with the settlement.

A. Bodner moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve the legal agreement worked out by David Grogins, Town Counsel, representing the Town of Ridgefield, and Mr. Provey which establishes a new boundary of the Provey/Girl Scout property for Sturges Park and grants Mr. Provey an easement to his driveway. Motion passed 4-0.

- 2) Ridgefield Responds to Haiti – Betsy Brand and John Chase came forward to describe how Ridgefield Responds was started as a town mobilization effort to respond to the Hurricane Katrina disaster with volunteer support and fundraising and transport of disaster relief collections to Pass Christian, MS. Ridgefield Responds is now adopting the town of Jacmel, Haiti to send direct

support to this town's people in need following the earthquake and all its resulting devastation which occurred on January 12, 2010. The short term goal is to provide food and medical supplies. The long term goal is to assist with rebuilding. A load of food was delivered today. There is \$6,000 left from Ridgefield Responds which could be used toward this Haiti program. A. Bodner inquired as to how do we know for sure where the cash is going? Supporting documentation is needed to show who received the dollars. We do not want to jeopardize the integrity of our 501c3 donation program. This type of account is needed to allow for matching fund donations. What is the authorization process? Ridgefield Responds has a steering committee of six individuals. The monies will go thru the Town , but this is not a Town committee.

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the use of the Friends of Ridgefield 501c3 account for the Hope for Jacmel, Haiti Response project. Motion passed 4-0.

1. Jesse Lee United Methodist Church Requested Tax Abatement

Pastor Bill of the Jesse Lee United Methodist Church and Tax Collector, Al Garzi came forward to discuss the proposed tax abatement for the Jesse Lee property at 207 Main as requested in his February 3, 2010 memo to R. Marconi. A. Bodner stated that he does not like to see properties on the Grand List with subsequent subtraction of tax dollars. This makes us short dollars from the Grand List. Al Garzi explained the need for the abatements.

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the property tax abatement request for Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church for fiscal year July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010 for property located at 207 Main Street, as presented by Al Garzi, Tax Assessor, for a total of \$3,215.07 (\$2,735.50 for the property previously occupied by the Montessori School, which vacated the space mid-June 2009, and \$479.57 for the area used as a commuter lot.) Motion passed 4-0.

2. Golf Course Financials: Frank Sergiovanni

Frank Sergiovanni, Golf Course Director, came forward to present the Golf Course's financials fiscal year-to-date. They finished the season down 6 ½ % from the prior season (-\$84K). The wet weather in June, July, Aug and October resulted in a decrease in the number of round. They opened the playing season March 20th, the earliest start to date. They usually open for play April 1st or later. Revenues were an increase of \$33K for March. Ridgefield Golf Course was down in 2009 compared to 2008, but revenues were comparable to 2007. They plan to use the months of February and March to promote the course. Mr. Sergiovanni stated the need to position ourselves and be aware of the competition. The downturn in the economy has had an effect on revenues. Price wars were going on.

Andy Bodner asked if the Golf Course finds themselves to be short on revenue, is there any reduction on the expense side? Mr. Sergiovanni responded that he feels the Golf Course will be OK as they had previously made cuts in expenses. June 2009 was bad as there were 23 days of rain. The future big expense will be to pave the parking lot next year – a 52,000 sq. ft area.

R. Marconi expressed the Board's thank you to the Golf Course Commission and personnel.

3. Golf Course Capital Budget (15 min)

The Golf Course capital requests include the following: Greens mower for \$19,000 and a Fairway Top Dresser for \$26,000, which helps in eliminating the wet areas – this is something done each year. The Greens mower would replace a 15 year-old mower; this has been postponed for the past

two years in the budget process. If the Highway Dept.'s truck is approved, then the Golf Course would welcome use of the old truck. What will happen if the Highway Dept.'s truck is not approved? Then the Golf Course will just have to do without for another year.

4. Engineering Department Capital Budget (30 min)

The Engineering Department's capital requests include the following:

Venus Building - \$80,000 for A/C Upgrade and \$30,000 Boiler Study (R. Marconi indicated how he is not an advocate of a study)

Town Hall – Window replacement for \$25,000 (Some of the windows were previously replaced, but not the sides of the building)

Sidewalk Improvement – State Grant (OCIP) for \$150,000. The \$150,000 will be returned to the Town from the State, but the dollars have to be part of the bonding first.

East Ridge Gas Main for \$420,000. A. Bodner indicated that he would like to bring this item before the voters with a Special Town Meeting and not wait to do this. The Board of Finance would need to be in favor of this and call for the Town Meeting. The payback will take about 2 ½ to 3 years, and thus it makes sense to do this project as soon as possible. A question was raised whether residents could hook into the gas line? R. Marconi responded that he hopes the gas line will be big enough for residents to be able to join in. A meeting is schedule with Yankee Gas for February 5 in the a.m. Gas is one-third cheaper than oil. The boilers involved are dual fuel and would just have to be converted to gas.

Town Tree Warden – Mr. Pinchbeck has put in his annual request for \$35,000.

A discussion followed regarding the Venus Building boilers. They are so old it is difficult to locate replacement parts. We need to change to a dual-fuel system. We are trying to keep a balance to the bottom line, which is difficult. Chef's Warehouse completed their duct work for the air conditioning in their part of the Venus Building, and we did an abatement to cover their costs. A. Bodner indicated that dollars spent on improving the building's "systems" is money well-spent. R. Marconi read the write-up in the budget book regarding the Venus Building A/C upgrades. The budget amount requested replaces the units (AC-4 and AC-5) that serve the Board of Education offices which experience cold temperatures during the summer months due in part to the oversized units. The budget proposal of \$80,000 includes the replacement of existing air handlers due to recent EPA regulation changes requiring upgrades to 410A Freon not anticipated in the 2001 study of the existing air conditioning systems at the Venus Building.

5. Parks & Recreation Capital Budget (30 min)

The Parks & Recreation Capital requests as presented by Director, Paul Roche, include the following:

Rotary Park Playground – Phase II for \$260,000 (\$60,000 less matching funds) is moved over to the 2011-12 fiscal year.

Sr. Outdoor Fitness Course for \$20,000 (less matching funds of \$10,000)

Recreation Center HVAC for \$10,300

Barlow Pool – pool resurfacing and filter for \$163,000 (less matching funds of \$81,500). This is requested by the Barlow Pool Committee and would solve the mechanics of the pool with a ten-year warranty.

Vehicle Replacement includes a mid-sized truck for \$70,000 and a 1 ½ dump truck with plow for \$40,000 as they have found a smaller truck is more usable than a larger one. They have already purchased a stainless steel sander.

Equipment Replacement for \$8,800 is for portable safety lights on a trailer

Recreational Fields – Park Safety Improvements for \$16,000 – fencing and lighting

Paul Roche indicated how they would like to expand the Wellness Center with a “greenhouse effect”. Their business formula is to pay for upgrades and changes, but they need to invest dollars to make additional dollars. They are way down on overtime by planning for work hours and making it work. There is a resultant increase in grievances.

6. Fire Department Capital Budget (30 min)

Fire Chief Burford came forward to explain her capital requests for the Fire Department:

Assistant Chief’s Car – same as the Chief’s car for \$35,000; current vehicle would be moved to the Building Dept., Planning & Zoning

Tanker #10 for \$475,000 (less trade-in for \$30,000)

SCUBA equipment for \$58,710 – breathing apparatus (4 year replacement). This is the second year of this program. We have been out of compliance for the past ten years.

R. Marconi indicated that we should talk about Fire Department capital expenditures in a 3-5 year format, not just look at one year at a time.

7. General Capital Budget Discussion – In the next two weeks the various department heads will be meeting with the BOS to discuss their capital needs – Fire, Police, Highway, Parks & Recreation, and Town Engineers. The mill rate increase is now at 3.9. New single family residential construction has picked up a little with five spec houses. Last year there were none.

8. Capital Community College Agreement Resolution – This resolution needs to be approved again this year. We continue to take paramedic students as interns and have hired some that previously were students. It provides a training environment to our paramedic program.

A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the following resolution, authorizing Rudy Marconi to act on behalf of the Ridgefield Board of Selectmen in executing a College Service Agreement and contract to provide internship facilities for students from the EMT-Paramedic Program at Capital Community College, Hartford, CT. Motion passed 4-0.

AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

CERTIFICATION:

I, Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk of the Town of Ridgefield, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Ridgefield Board of Selectmen at its meeting on February 3, 2010, at which a quorum was present and acting throughout, and that the resolution has not been modified, rescinded, or revoked and is at present in full force and effect.

RESOLVED:

That the First Selectman, Rudy Marconi, be and hereby is authorized to act on behalf of the Ridgefield Board of Selectmen in executing a College Service Agreement and contract to provide internship facilities for students from the EMT-Paramedic Program at Capital Community College, Hartford, CT.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF: The undersigned has affixed her signature this _____ day of February 2010.

Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk

State of _____ ::
County of _____ ::

Personally appeared before me this _____ day of February, 2010, Barbara Serfilippi, Town Clerk of the Town of Ridgefield, and made oath that the above is a true copy from the records of the Board of Selectmen.

My commission expires on: _____

Notary Public

9. Selectman's Report

There is nothing to report this evening other than Governor Rell's budget doesn't have anything additional to offer Ridgefield – our share is “flat”..

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to recess the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:10 p.m. and go into Executive Session to discuss the Schlumberger property with a possible vote. Motion passed 4-0.

The BOS exited Executive Session at 10:30 p.m. – No vote was taken.

D. Masters moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:31 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet L. Johnson