

PUBLIC HEARING, SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING
MARCH 18, 2009

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

Public Hearing

*Notice is hereby given that a **Public Hearing** will be held on March 18, 2009, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to consider a proposed tax abatement agreement between the Town of Ridgefield and Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*

Special Town Meeting

*Notice is hereby given that a **Special Town Meeting** will be held on March 18, 2009, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut to consider and to act on the following:*

- 1) *A proposed tax abatement agreement between the Town of Ridgefield and Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*
- 2) *The proposed Town of Ridgefield Sex Offender Ordinance and to take such other actions which may properly come before the meeting.*

Board of Selectmen Agenda (immediately following Special Town Meeting)

- 1) ICLEI Presentation: Patrice Gillespie, Gary Green, John Katz
- 2) Commission for Disabled Interview: CJ Thomas
- 3) Charter Revision Commission Interviews: Sharon Hyde, Jerry Kiernan
- 4) Solid Waste Bid Decision
- 5) HDC Enforcement Officer Reappointment (Richard Baldelli)
- 6) IT Status Report/Discussion – Andrew Neblett, Chief John Roche
- 7) Parks & Recreation Commission Reappointment: Wayne Tinker
- 8) Commission on Aging Reappointments: Marion Freer, Mary Morrisroe, Mary Ann O’Grady, Eileen Wilson
- 9) Approval of Tax Refunds
- 10) BI Easement Agreement – set STM Date
- 11) Special Appropriation for Diesel & Gas – Set STM Date
- 12) Selectman’s Report
- 13) Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/4/09, 2/12/09 (Special Mtg), 2/12/09, 3/4/09
- 14) Executive Session: Current Litigation (Sturges Park)

Public Hearing

R. Marconi called the Public Hearing to order at 7:30 p.m. Al Garzi, Tax Assessor, came forward to discuss the proposed tax abatement for Boehringer Ingelheim. This is the third application for abatement, which is part of their proposed \$385 million building program in Ridgefield. This third building project is for utility relocation related to Building 10 at a cost of \$75,259.80. The abatement is for 85% of the tax assessment or \$63,970.83 for seven years. The remainder 15% tax assessment to be paid for the first year of the abatement is \$11,288.97. When BI was planning their proposed expansion, they looked at relocating to VA, Ohio and Connecticut. CT State statute allows for abatement and this was what convinced BI to do their expansion in Connecticut. At the end of 7 years, BI will pay the tax assessment in full. The end result is a big win for Ridgefield.

There were no questions from the public. The Public Hearing was closed at 7:40 p.m.

Special Town Meeting

The Special Town Meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. Minutes of the Special Town Meeting are under separate cover. The Special Town Meeting was closed at 8:10 p.m.

Board of Selectmen Meeting

R. Marconi called the BOS Meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.

- 1) ICLEI Presentation: Patrice Gillespie, Gary Green, John Katz
ICLEI stands for International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. Patrice Gillespie came forward to discuss the ICLEI and seek the Town of Ridgefield's support for the work of this Council. Ms. Gillespie stated that she had been a founding member of the Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment, which also is a liaison with the two Norwalk Watershed Groups, which have received the Governor's Awards. The ICLEI's focus is on ways to economize on energy consumption. Connecticut's Clean Energy Programs address both municipalities and residents. The ICLEI is backed by both the Environmental Protection Agency and the Conference of Mayors. She is seeking Ridgefield's membership in the ICLEI as part of the national strategy in the reduction of greenhouse gases. There is no membership fee for the first year because the \$600 annual fee has been donated by concerned Ridgefield residents.

Ms. Gillespie listed some of the benefits of membership in the ICLEI:

- a) Daily update on the economic stimulus package with details as to how we as a municipality can prepare to receive these funds. The ICLEI will help its members to receive these grant dollars.
- b) New software for the measurement of greenhouse gases – our “carbon inventory”. Ridgefield is fortunate as we are not impacted by either I95 or the Merritt Parkway.
- c) Training sessions for Town officials, volunteers and students – how they can help with the “carbon inventory”.
- d) The goal is to encourage Ridgefield to become a member of ICLEI prior to Earth Day on May 15.
- e) Suggest adoption of a submitted resolution similar to the one from Wilton – a resolution has been made up for Ridgefield.

Andy Bodner commented on how he applauds green energy, but he finds the resolution agreements troubling. He does not fully understand the cost implications. At this point he

feels we do not have enough information to sign up for membership even without the first year's cost to the Town.

J. Plock indicated the need to review the materials presented before agreeing to any such membership. We have already elected to strive to reduce our electrical consumption by 20% by 2010.

B. Manners commented on the wording of the resolution agreements. They are not binding actions but "urge" compliance. Ms. Manners expressed support for membership for the first year. We would like as a community to reduce our emissions. Federal funding and the stimulus package would be helpful. Federal dollars and the President's program are aimed at re-tooling America.

Ms. Gillespie pointed out how the numbers in the resolutions are tied into the Kyoto conference. The goal is to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050. This would amount to a 2% reduction each year.

John Katz, Ridgebury Rd., came forward to express his support of membership in the ICLEI. Membership will give us a one year commitment to digest all the information. Ridgefield is taking the leadership on energy reduction. That goal is being achieved thru the actions of the Board of Education and Gary Green's leadership. Membership in this organization will help to put Ridgefield on the map for this initiative. He urges, "try it for one year at no cost".

R. Marconi read aloud the drafted proposal for Ridgefield. B. Manners indicated that she is willing to endorse a trial membership of a year at no cost to the Town. A. Bodner indicated that he was not willing to sign this document. It was agreed that the BOS will review the materials and put the issue on the next BOS agenda for consideration again. D. Masters expressed appreciation for the gift of membership for one year to help us on our way. This information could help us to chart a better path. The BOS thanked Ms. Gillespie, Mr. Green and Mr. Katz for coming forward with this presentation.

2) Commission for Disabled Interview: CJ Thomas

CJ Thomas came forward to express her interest in serving on the Commission for Disabled. R. Marconi read the email received from Ms. Thomas. She has already attended two or three meetings. There are two vacancies on the Commission. Ms. Thomas is handicapped herself. She wants to get "really involved" in her community. She commented on how many of the restaurants in town are not really accessible. There is a need for increased education on how to be truly accessible for the handicapped.

B. Manners moved & J. Plock seconded a motion to appoint CJ Thomas to fill one of the vacancies on the Commission for the Disabled for a two-year term. Motion passed 5-0.

3) Charter Revision Commission Interviews: Sharon Hyde, Jerry Kiernan

Sharon Hyde came forward to introduce herself to the BOS and express her interest in serving on the Charter Revision Commission. She has lived in Ridgefield for 13 years, is trained as an attorney, but is not working currently. She feels she has the time and has a comfort level for working on this type of a project. She has been an active member of the League of Women Voters. She met with R. Marconi and reviewed the timeframe from the previous Charter Revision Commission which took about a year to complete their work. A. Bodner asked Ms.

Hyde if she understands how the different boards interact and how the budget process works. Has she attended any meetings in town? Ms. Hyde has attended Board of Education, Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen meetings. She has some sense of the budget process and previously served as President of the High School PTA. She worked on their by-laws and questions about fund raising. The BOS thanked Ms. Hyde for her candidacy.

Jerry Kiernan came forward to meet with the BOS relative to his application to membership on the Charter Revision Commission. He is a 32-year resident of Ridgefield and is retired from his IT and software development career. He served on the Republican Town Committee for 10 to 12 years. He has attended Board of Finance, Board of Education and Board of Selectmen meetings over the years and has served on various Town Committees. He feels he is skillful at the process of soliciting ideas from others, filtering these ideas and coming up with recommendation for moving forward. His wife is employed as the Treasurer of the Town of Ridgefield. D. Masters inquired as to any special issues he wanted to work on in connection with the Charter revision? Mr. Kiernan responded that he has no agenda. He feels he is adept at collecting input and evaluating what is received. He thinks public meetings need to be better publicized. How do we get an increase in citizen involvement? He agreed that the League of Women Voters is good about this. Mr. Kiernan was thanked by the BOS for coming forward with his candidacy.

R. Marconi reported that eight applicants have been interviewed to date – two have dropped out. Two additional interviews are scheduled for the next BOS meeting. He will put one more notice in the paper prior to the next BOS meeting. The Commission can consist of 7 to 9 members.

- 4a) Solid Waste Bid Decision - Jerry Gay, Purchasing Director for the Town of Ridgefield, came forward to discuss his research into this issue. The Solid Waste contract was put out to bid for three weeks and resulted in nine returns. Seven of the new bids were below our current contract. Our desire is to lock in the lowest responsible bidder that will provide the service we want. Mr. Gay pointed out that the lowest bid was from Cerreta, but they use someone else's trucks. The bid was for one year, but we need a three-year contract. We requested that the bids include an escalator clause but there were no responses to this part of the request. Our current contract was using a CPI index escalator. The BOS would like to see a draft of the contract worked up from the bid specifications prior to a vote of acceptance. Also, the length of time of the contract is important plus agreement on the escalator clause. We do not want any fuel surcharges. Mr. Gay will develop the contract between now and the April 6 BOS meeting with a copy provided to the BOS for their review prior to the meeting. Cerretta & Somers have HRRAs permits for compliance, which is good. Mr. Cerreta, a Ridgefield resident, indicated that Somers Sanitation is his partner – also a part owner of Cerreta Waste. Somers has over 31 vehicles – more than enough to cover Ridgefield.
- 4b) Special Appropriation for Diesel & Gas – Set STM Date
D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to move up as Agenda Item #4b, Agenda Item #11 – Special Appropriation for Diesel & Gas – Set STM Date. Motion approved 5-0. The Town would like to lock in a price for diesel and gas for next year as the Town and the Board of Education have already done for fuel oil. There needs to be Town Meeting approval for such a purchase commitment. **J. Plock moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to set a Special Town Meeting for March 30, 9:30 A.M., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT, for approval of the pre-purchase of 120,000 gallons of Diesel and 45,000 of**

87 Octane Gasoline for the Town of Ridgefield expected usage thru June 2010 at an estimated cost not to exceed \$325,000. Motion passed 5-0.

5) HDC Enforcement Officer Reappointment

A letter has been received from Leslie Ide, Chairman of the Ridgefield Historic District Commission expressing the Commission's desire for renewal of Mr. Baldelli's position as HDC Enforcement Officer. **Andy Bodner moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to reappoint Richard Baldelli as HDC Enforcement Officer for an additional term. Motion passed 5-0.**

6) IT Status Report/Discussion – Andrew Neblett, Chief John Roche

Mr. Neblett and Chief Roche came forward to discuss this issue. Mr. Neblett reported that it is a time of stabilization and a minimum of down time relative to the IT status of the Police Department. The Police Department's IT is "up and running". Security has been tightened, and a reduction in redundancy. Previously if one server is down, it would cascade to others. A replacement program has been started and installation of back-up systems. A. Bodner asked if Mr. Neblett is comfortable with the reduced IT budget for the 2010 fiscal year? He replied that it will be tight. Mr. Neblett has made a spreadsheet of all the IT expenses. He is currently looking into possible back-ups for when Andrew goes out of town. We do not have a support contract to provide for this coverage. Mr. Neblett will meet with R. Marconi to discuss this issue further. B. Manners expressed a thank you to Mr. Neblett from the BOS.

Chief Roche expressed the need for one IT person in each building to assist Andrew rather than a call for help from every desk. We need to set up a help desk with a centralized repairs process.

Mr. Neblett was asked for where is his department on expenses for the current 2009 year? He was at 57% at the end of February on equipment maintenance costs which is a little under-budget. Rather than getting into line items, his total for the year is at about 50% and 2/3rds of the year is past. This is good.

Another idea is to have "brown bag" lunches for IT questions. Mr. Neblett is working with Laurie Scholl on the possible implementation of this idea for both union and non-union employees.

7) Parks & Recreation Commission Reappointment: Wayne Tinker

Mr. Tinker came forward to say hello again to the BOS and express his interest to continue to serve on the Parks & Recreation Commission. There are currently no vacancies on the Commission. An email has been received from Phil Kearns, Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission recommending that Mr. Tinker be reappointed. The BOS thanked Mr. Tinker for his many years of service. He has been on the Commission for 22 years and has served as Chairman of the Fields. Mr. Tinker stated how he has an expertise that no one else on the Commission has. He does a lot of work on the fields, and has been involved with repair to the playing fields for the past thirty years.

R. Marconi asked Mr. Tinker about the current problems with the Girls Softball teams and the allocation of the fields. Are we allowing out-of-town girls to play on Ridgefield town teams? Mr. Tinker replied that there had been a rule that a team can have on it no more than two players from out-of-town. He'll meet with R. Marconi to discuss this situation further.

It was agreed to advertise and see if additional applicants come forward with an interest in serving on the Parks & Recreation Commission or other commissions or committees as well. Mr. Tinker

was thanked for all his years of commitment to Parks & Recreation. A decision will be made in the April 6 BOS meeting relative to Mr. Tinker's reappointment.

8) Commission on Aging Reappointments: Marion Freer, Mary Morrisroe, Mary Ann O'Grady, Eileen Wilson

There are currently no vacancies on the Commission on Aging. Should the Town advertise for possible vacancies on various boards and commissions in order to offer the opportunity to serve to additional Town residents? D. Masters pointed out that a review of attendance at various boards and commissions had been suggested in the past. This should be implemented prior to any reappointments. Should possible openings be posted on the website as well? R. Marconi will look into this.

9) Approval of Tax Refunds

D. Masters moved and J. Plock seconded a motion to approve the refunds requested by Jane Berendsen-Hill, Tax Collector in her memo dated 3/12/09 for a total of \$6,283.84. Motion passed 5-0.

10) BI Easement Agreement – Set STM Date

A new Public Hearing needs to be scheduled relative to Boehringer Ingelheim's request for an easement to eliminate the curve on Ridgebury Road. Since the prior Public Hearing, R. Marconi has met with John Hardeman of BI and has additional information to share with the public.

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to set a Public Hearing on April 6, 2009, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Large Conference Room, 400 Main St., Ridgefield, CT, and a Town Meeting on April 22, 7:30 p.m., same location, relative to the proposed Boehringer Ingelheim Easement Agreement. Motion passed 5-0.

11) Selectman's Report

R. Marconi provided an update on the unions which are working on an agreement relative to the budget issues. The agreement with the Police Department has been signed with a concession of about \$30,000. He is still working with the Fire Department and nothing yet back from the Highway Department.

The State Highway project relative to the corner of Ivy Hill and Branchville Rd. (Rte. 102) – Ridgefield has been meeting with the State on this issue for the past 3-4 years. This is a very high accident corner. R. Marconi showed the map of the intersection. The plan is to take out the curve but this would involve moving the septic of the residents located there. What about connecting these residents to the sewer line? The State is now looking at creating a 6' x 20' island at this location. This will afford a better view at the intersection prior to a left-hand turn. The Police Commission has to approve any changes. Residents have suggested a Stop sign at this intersection but it is felt that this would result in a line of traffic backing up from the Stop sign. A. Bodner commented on how this is a terrible corner, but a change in the curve of the road will not slow down the speed. The cost of any change in the road would be thru the State's maintenance budget. It was agreed that a solution to this dangerous intersection is a step in the right direction.

12) Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/4/09, 2/12/09 (Special Mtg.), 2/12/09, 3/4/09

A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as written the minutes of the February 4, 2009, Public Hearing & Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed. 4-0-1. J. Plock abstained as she was absent from the February 4, 2009 BOS Meeting.

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the February 12, 2009, Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the February 12, 2009, Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve as amended the minutes of the March 4, 2009, Public Informational Meeting & Board of Selectmen Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

13) Executive Session: Current Litigation (Sturges Park)

There was no Executive Session as the Sturges Park issue was not ready to be discussed.

J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:00 p.m. There was no Executive Session. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson