

BOARD of SELECTMEN MEETING – APRIL 23, 2008

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

Special Town Meeting
To Act Upon the Proposed Zoning Citation Ordinance
(Minutes under separate cover)

Board of Selectmen Agenda (immediately following Special Town Meeting)

1. Pension Commission Presentation & Reappointments
2. Certified Local Government Discussion: Phil Esser & Mary Dunn
3. RPC Interviews: Dylan Manderlink, Zach Porterfield
4. Graveyard Committee Interviews: Sarah Slavin, Betty Jane Third, Jeffrey Carr
5. Transfers & Budget Resolutions: Jay Wahlberg
6. Tax Refund Approvals
7. Small Cities Grant Resolution
8. Lyme Disease Grant Resolution
9. Selectman's Report
10. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 4/2/08

R. Marconi called the Board of Selectmen Meeting to order at 8:55 P.M., immediately following the Special Town Meeting.

B. Manners moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to add as #1 to the evening's agenda – Approval of the Fire Department's Safer Grant. Motion passed 4-0.

A. Bodner moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to add to the evening's agenda – RMAC Presentation. Motion passed 4-0.

1. Fire Department's Safer Grant – Chief Burford came forward to discuss the proposed Safer Grant previously discussed at the Fire Commission Meeting. A. Bodner expressed appreciation to Chief Burford for the acquisition of the grant, the only one like this awarded in the State, and stated that he is in favor of accepting this grant. There are no cost consequences for accepting this grant and perhaps it will be revenue positive. It will result in better service and some possible cost savings. D. Masters stated that receipt of this grant is most impressive. It doesn't solve all our problems, but will be most helpful in the short term. The Commission is in support of this grant. R. Marconi expressed congratulations to Chief Burford. Chief Burford indicated how she and the Fire Department are very pleased to be the recipients of this grant.

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to approve acceptance of the Fire Department's Safer Grant. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Pension Commission Presentation & Reappointments – The following members of the Pension Commission came forward: Dave Campbell, James Stoveken, Michael Hagan, Ted Seibert, William Whelan, Chris Christiansen, and J. Wahlberg, Controller.

Dave Campbell indicated that they were not bringing as “good news” as in past years. Their fiscal year is in June, but as of March the numbers indicated -8.5%. Their goal is to be +7% each year. They did have a sub-prime loss as the result of one fund which contributed to this negative number. They do average the numbers over five years. He reviewed their asset mix and indicated a higher percent in cash than is the norm. They are carefully evaluating what to do with the cash and expressed stock market and bond market concerns, and are confident of no more problems with sub-prime investments. A. Bodner asked if the pension funds income continues to be in the negative, at what point will they need to seek an increase in contributions? Mr. Campbell responded that he could not really answer that question. An increase will be required if the need is there. A. Bodner also indicated surprise that only 14% of the investments were in international. Mr. Campbell responded that one should look at the total numbers, both fixed and equity. R. Marconi expressed appreciation to the Pension Commission from the BOS and the realization that times are difficult.

D. Masters moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to reappoint to the Pension Commission for the following staggered terms:

David Campbell – 6/01/10

Christofer Christiansen – 6/01/10

Michael Hagan – 6/01/10

Walter Seibert – 6/01/11

James Stoveken, Jr. – 6/01/09

William Whelan – 6/01/09

Motion passed 4-0.

3. Certified Local Government Discussion: Phil Esser & Mary Dunn

Phil Esser and Mary Dunn came forward to respond to questions raised when they last discussed with the BOS this proposed CLG designation for Ridgefield. D. Masters had inquired as to who would oversee the administrative details and grant writing? Ms. Dunn indicated that grant writers such as L. Wagner & Associates would not be necessary especially for small grants, such as the \$2800 one. Mr. Esser stated that if Ridgefield was a CLG member, then we could seek help from the State Historical Preservation Office. For the larger grants which pertain to historical preservation for town buildings, then a grant writer would be needed, but towns with CLG designation also receive higher scores. There is a workshop in May that Mr. Esser will attend. R. Marconi indicated that the “Historic Register” house adjacent to the Post Office would be an applicant for grant dollars. The house is in bad condition. The thought is that if restored, it would be a good Sunrise Cottage #2. The house belongs to the Post Office under a 40-year lease. A. Bodner stated that we can participate for awhile and see how we like it. It will be helpful to receive some historic preservation dollars.

B. Manners moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to approve Ridgefield’s application for Certified Local Government designation. Motion passed 4-0.

4. RPC Interviews: Dylan Manderlink, Zach Porterfield

Dylan and Zach came forward to express their interest in serving on the Ridgefield Prevention Council (RPC). Dylan had participated earlier in the day as the student who did not survive in the mock automobile crash at Ridgefield High School. Zach serves on the Youth Commission and

indicated the need to tackle teenage drinking and driving from all angles. D. Masters inquired if the mock crash had an impact on the school for the entire day? Zach responded that the crash scenario did have an overall impact – it sent the right message.

B. Manners inquired about the DARE program and if they felt that DARE had an impact on them? Zach responded that DARE did have an impact on him and the carry-over is responsible for his interest in serving on the RPC. Dylan responded that DARE prepared her for joining Youth to Youth and attending their national conference in the summer. DARE did push her to get involved.

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to appoint Dylan Manderlink and Zach Porterfield for a two-year term as members of the Ridgefield Community Prevention Council. Motion passed 4-0.

5. Graveyard Committee Interviews: Sarah Slavin, Betty Jane Third, Jeffrey Carr

All three applicants came forward to express their interest in serving on the Graveyard Committee. They have all attended at least one meeting of the Committee. R. Marconi read their letters of application. Ms. Slavin indicated how the Committee is still working on the cataloging of the gravesites. They have come along way, but it is a big job. There are still some gravestones under the sod. D. Masters stated how she has attended the Graveyard Committee's annual meeting and how the members take this committee's responsibilities seriously. The history of Ridgefield is such an important part of the town.

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to appoint as members of the Graveyard Restoration Committee: Jeffrey Carr, Sarah Slavin and Betty Jane Third. Motion passed 4-0.

6. RMAC Presentation

Linda Haynes and David Scott came forward to discuss the proposed use of Ridgefield's old train station (now part of Ridgefield Supply) for the headquarters for RMAC (Ridgefield Music & Arts Center), a performing arts center for the youth of Ridgefield. Ridgefield Supply has offered to donate the structure and move the building to a new location. Mr. Scott has offered to do the architectural work pro bono and presented his drawings for the planned restoration. He showed some pictures of how the station looked in the 1970's with a flat roof and a water tank on the roof. Water would then be available for the engine when it came into the station. Mr. Scott stated that the old building is a "unique" station, and he is very excited about the opportunity to preserve it. The last passenger train thru Ridgefield was in the 1920's. Freight trains passed thru Ridgefield until the early 60's.

The proposed location for the train station/RMAC headquarters is the approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ acre town property between the Boys' and Girls' Club and Balducci's, referred to as the "Casey Fuel Parking Lot". The plan for the property includes increasing the parking spots from 62 spots to 71. As a performing arts center, the station would be used in the evening. The parking spots could be used in the daytime for town parking. The building is 60 ft. long and 19 ft. wide. The plans call for putting a big "bustle" on the back. The station will look exactly as it did originally from the front, complete with tracks. The original colors are still there for matching – barn red and mustard yellow. The proposed cost for the restoration is about \$1 million, with \$30,000 already raised. They are speaking with PepsiCo and Kodak for possible funding assistance. They are seeking Board of Selectmen donation of the property and approval to move forward.

D. Masters stated how the Theatre Barn on Halpin Lane is scrambling for dollars and would it be possible for RMAC to use their facility? Linda Haynes responded that the Theatre Barn could only give RMAC a few weekends a year whereas the purpose of RMAC is to have a place where the youth can sponsor performances every weekend. This would be a facility for other non-profits to use. The stage would be 35 ft by 25 ft with folding chair seating for 200. The room would be multi-purpose and the chairs could be stored under the stage.

R. Marconi inquired as to continued parent support for RMAC over the years? Ms. Haynes responded that the residents are excited about this new project and she feels this level of support will continue. They hope to break ground by the end of 2008 and are seeking Town approval. Fund raising can then “take off”. R. Marconi indicated that an 8-24 would be needed and a Town Meeting to approve use of the property.

Andy Bodner indicated that something in writing would be helpful – goals of the organization. We would want to be sure that the mission doesn’t change and that the activities go along with the original agreement. The non-profit organization would own the building.

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion asking R. Marconi to send a letter to Planning & Zoning for an 8-24 relative to the use of the Ridgefield town property between the Boys’ and Girls’ Club and Balducci’s (“the Casey Fuel Parking Lot”) for the new home of RMAC in Ridgefield’s old train station (to be moved to this location) and a Public Hearing set for May 21, 2008, at 7:30 Town Hall Large Conference Room to discuss this proposed use of Ridgefield town property. Motion passed 4-0.

7. Transfers & Budget Resolutions: Jay Wahlberg

John Pinchbeck and J. Wahlberg came forward to discuss the need for additional funds for tree care. Mr. Pinchbeck indicated that he needs at least \$12,000 as he has already incurred about \$7,000 to \$8,000 in expenses not yet paid for. D. Masters stated how this is a problem every year because we barely fund this line item. Ridgefield’s trees keep the town beautiful. We always want to replace trees and a thank you to John Pinchbeck for doing what he is doing!

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve Department of Finance Memorandum #200812 appropriation from General Contingency in the amount of \$12,500 (not \$17,500 as requested) for additional funding for tree removal on Town right-of-ways and dead trees requiring attention – increase #10370-52130 Tree Care for \$12,500 and decrease #10890-59101 General Contingency for \$12,500. Motion passed 4-0.

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve Department of Finance Memorandum #200811 Intra-Departmental Transfer for the Parks & Recreation Department’s incurred costs associated with its CLASS maintenance system contract – increase in #10351-53002, Computer Support, for \$4,602 and decrease in \$10356-52317, Program Costs, for \$4,602. Motion passed 4-0.

It was agreed to wait on Memorandum #200813 until the referendum costs are known for the new tabulator voting system.

8. Lyme Disease Grant Resolution -

Ed Briggs, Public Health Director, Sue Perlotto, Karen Gaudian, and Jennifer Reid, came forward to discuss this proposed resolution for \$50,000 to provide Lyme Disease education for Fairfield County (to occur in Ridgefield but to be made available to others from Fairfield County). \$25,000

will be received upon signature of the resolution and the remaining \$25,000 after the first financial report is submitted.

D. Masters moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to authorize Ed Briggs, Director of Health, to sign the Lyme Disease Grant Resolution for \$50,000 from the Connecticut Department of Health for Lyme Disease education for Fairfield County. Motion passed 4-0.

Barbara Hoch is retiring June 30th after 25 years of Ridgefield employment. Ed Briggs will be the lone person. A desk in the Department of Health could be made available for a grant person.

9. Tax Refund Approvals -

B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve the tax refunds totaling \$2,783.30 as requested by Tax Collector, Jane Bernedsen-Hill, in her memo dated April 9, 2008. Motion passed 4-0.

10. Small Cities Grant Resolution -

A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to approve application for the Small Cities Grant Resolution from the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$750,000.00 for ADA improvements to the Police Station. Motion passed 4-0.

11. Selectman's Report -

- VNA Lease – An appraiser has visited the site and will be reporting back shortly. There is a potential new tenant for another space.
- The State of Connecticut loan has come in at 1.5% rate for the proposed North St. water main extending to Barlow and Scotland Schools. The estimated cost is \$3.5 million; Aquarian will pay 20%. Should we put a hold on the loan? Go out to bid? A. Bodner expressed the need to know the numbers before going ahead. This project has been on hold for the past two years waiting for the loan approval. Only one test with no chloride problem is needed and then do not have to test again. R. Marconi will call the engineer and get another report. Once the bids come in, the project would have to have Town Meeting approval to proceed.
- Pete Casagrande submitted his resignation from the Ridgefield Commission for the Disabled, effective 4/15/08.
- Penny Kaufman has resigned from the Chamber of Commerce but is continuing to serve on the Economic Development Commission as a resident member.
- The State Legislature has adopted a compromise workers' compensation bill eliminating the need for special mandates, which is a welcome change.
- Notice has been received from the Government Finance Officers Association awarding Jay Wahlberg, Town Controller, a Certificate of Achievement plaque for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Ridgefield's comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007. Congratulations to Jay!

R. Marconi read the resolutions prepared for the May 5, 2008 Annual Meeting:

The following resolutions were adopted for placement on the ballot for the Town of Ridgefield Annual Town Meeting to be held on May 5, 2008, at 7:30 P.M., at the Ridgefield Playhouse, 80 East Ridge, Ridgefield, Connecticut:

- **A. Bodner moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to consider recommendation of the Board of Finance relative to appropriations for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009: Town Expenditures (excluding Board of Education Expenditures and Capital and Non-Recurring Fund Expenditures): \$44,882,102. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to consider Recommendation of the Board of Finance relative to appropriation for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009: Board of Education Expenditures: \$76,712,318. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **D. Masters moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to consider recommendation of the Board of Finance relative to appropriations for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2008 and ending June 30, 2009: Capital and Non-recurring Fund Expenditures: \$304,000. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **A. Bodner moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to consider a resolution entitled “Resolution Making Appropriations Aggregating \$826,000 for Various Town Building and Improvement Projects and Equipment and Authorizing the Issuance of \$826,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriations and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose”. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **D. Masters moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to consider a resolution entitled “Resolution Making Appropriations Aggregating \$1,234,000 for Various Town Road and Infrastructure Improvements and Authorizing the Issuance of \$1,234,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriations and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose”. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **B. Manners moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to consider a Resolution entitled “Resolution Making Appropriations Aggregating \$445,000 for Vehicles and Equipment and Authorizing the Issuance of \$445,500 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriations and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowing for Such Purpose”. The form of the ballot label on the voting machine shall read as follows: “Shall the resolution appropriating \$445,500 for vehicles and equipment and authorizing the issuance of \$445,500 bonds of the Town to meet said appropriation, be approved? YES/NO”. Motion passed 4-0.**
- **A. Bodner moved and B. Manners seconded a motion to consider “Shall the resolution entitled “Resolution Making Appropriations Aggregating \$1,280,600 for School Improvement Projects and Equipment and Authorizing the Issuance of \$1,280,600 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriations and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose” be approved? The form of the ballot label on the voting machine shall read as follows: “Shall the resolution appropriating \$1,280,600 for**

school improvement projects and equipment and authorizing the issuance of \$1,280,600 bonds of the Town to meet said appropriation, be approved? YES/NO” Motion passed 4-0.

- B. Manners moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to consider “Shall the resolution entitled “Resolution Appropriating \$4,250,000 for the Construction of Renovations and Improvements to the Police Headquarters Building and Authorizing the Issuance of \$4,250,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriation and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose” be approved?” The form of the ballot label on the voting machine shall read as follows: “Shall the resolution appropriating \$4,250,000 for the construction of renovations and improvements to the Police headquarters building and authorizing the issuance of \$4,250,000 bonds of the Town to meet said appropriation, be approved? YES/NO” Motion passed 4-0.

- D. Masters moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to consider and vote upon a resolution entitled “Resolution Making Appropriations Aggregating \$344,400 for Various Improvement Projects and Equipment and Authorizing the Issuance of \$344,400 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriations and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose”. Motion passed 4-0.

B. Manners moved and A. Bodner seconded a motion to defer until the next BOS Meeting approval of the April 2, 2008, BOS meeting minutes and adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 10:20 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson